

**UNDERSTANDING THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR:
A STUDY OF TWO VOLUNTARY DEVELOPMENT
ORGANISATIONS (VDOs)**

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Shailendra Kumar Dwivedi

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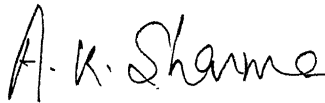
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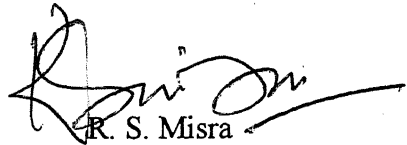
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supervision, and that this work has not been submitted elsewhere for a degree.



A. K. Sharma
Professor of Sociology
Department of Humanities and
Social Sciences
I.I.T. Kanpur, 208016



R. S. Misra
Professor of Philosophy
Department of Humanities and
Social Sciences
I.I.T. Kanpur, 208016

September 1999

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SYNOPSIS

Veritable mushrooming of voluntary development organisations (VDOs) is recognised as one of the most striking features of change in contemporary society. In the recent past, VDOs have emerged as the major social, cultural and ideological actors of civil society. They have been projected as the potent instruments of building a people-centred model of development. The VDO boom in the decade of 1980s and 1990s has become the centre of discourse, policy and programmes of national and international development institutions and aid agencies. Intellectuals and academicians have started theorising this phenomenon. However, the studies on VDOs have either analysed the nature of their relationships with other agencies of state, market and civil society, or their internal dynamics in an organisational framework. A few sociological studies have examined the organisational processes of VDOs by placing them in a broad structural framework. In this context, the present study of two VDOs reflects upon the processes of change in the organisational capacity, the mode of interventions, the nature of interactions among the diverse collectivities, and the attitudes to the management of voluntary sector in the framework of civil society.

Chapter One states the research problem, and its rationale. Based on the available literature on the subject, it involves in a theoretical debate on VDOs. It identifies two paradigms in which activists and intellectuals have looked at the voluntary development sector. They are: VDOs as agents of the capitalist state; and VDOs as functionaries of the civil society. This provides the basis for the development of the conceptual framework of the study. In this study, we have used the theoretical framework proposed by David Billis which conceptualises the voluntary sector as an ambiguous zone of intersection of the bureaucratic world and the associational world. Billis refers this zone as the ambiguous zone of voluntary agencies (AVA). However, the model has been modified in the light of the manifest concerns of the VDOs. We argue that VDOs, being the autonomous space of collective value rational action, should be situated in the broader structural framework of civil society. The adding of civil society framework not only deconstructs and demystifies certain prevalent notions about VDOs, but also adds some new dimensions to voluntarism. It considers the people/target group as a crucial

collectivity besides the executive body, the professionals and the grassroots workers. This framework conceptualises three distinct categories of VDOs within AVA. They are, movement type VDOs (MVDOs), delivery type VDOs (DVDOs), and ambiguous VDOs (AVDOs). In this study, we have focussed upon the AVDOs, in which two different types of VDOs can be delineated based upon their mode of intervention. In this study, they have been referred as product oriented VDOs and process oriented VDOs. Finally, the chapter presents the objectives of the study, and the research questions.

Chapter Two presents the methodology of this study. It shows that we have attempted a comparative study of two cases of VDOs, which represent two broad categories of VDOs emerging from the conceptual framework. In this study, they have been referred as the product oriented VDOs and the process oriented VDOs. They are active at the grassroots level in rural areas of the State of Uttar Pradesh. They emerged during 1980s, when the voluntary development sector in India started getting massive financial support from foreign funding agencies as well as from the state. As of today, both of them are dependent on external funding, which is commonly the case with the overwhelming majority of VDOs in the country. Strategically, they have focussed on issues related to women. People's Action for National Integration (PANI) represents those VDOs, which adopt a project delivery type approach in the field, and rely more on the professionals. Disha Social Organisation (DISHA) on the other hand represents the process oriented VDOs, which took up issues that emerged during the process of intervention, and organised people to initiate appropriate actions. Tools like interviews, observations, focus group discussions, village meetings, informal discussions, and questionnaires were used to generate data. Insiders' perspectives in the field settings were unearthed through discussions and triangulation of methods. Analysis and interpretation of data were presented before the subjects, and modified in the light of their reactions before drawing the conclusions.

Chapter Three deals with the People's Action for National Integration (PANI) which is primarily a product delivery type VDO. In this chapter we have dealt with the history of PANI, the nature of interventions made in the field area, and the mode of intervention. We have also analysed the nature of interactions among the leadership, the professionals, the grassroots workers, and the people/target group, and their implications. The findings show that the emergence of PANI in the voluntary

development sector owes to both, the voluntaristic and the structural factors. In the process of growth, PANI passes through four distinct phases, namely, the phase of conceptualisation, the phase of ice-breaking, the phase of formalisation, and the phase of expansion. It was found that the project-based mode of intervention did not provide adequate space to address the needs and situational uncertainties emerging at the field level. The huge diversity in the nature of various projects undertaken by PANI lacked consistency and direction. These variations often created confusion among the staff, particularly among the grassroots workers. Inconsistencies were also visible in the haphazard selection of the project villages. The preoccupation of the leadership with the sustenance and security concerns of the organisation reduces their contact with the field. The dominance of the concrete project based mode of intervention brings in formal structure, roles and responsibilities. This, along with the informalities associated with the voluntary sector, leads to dilemmas and ambiguities about one's roles and responsibilities. The professional staff's preference to confine their actions within the boundaries of the project specifications, and the grassroots workers' preference to orient their actions according to the emerging needs and priorities of the people, generates conflicts. Moreover, the time-bound nature of the projects, and the project-based appointment of the staff adversely affect their motivation and commitment towards the assignments. It leads to a mechanical approach, devoid of voluntary spirit. The workers slowly start perceiving the VDO like any other private organisation, primarily serving the interests of the leadership. The target group develops a project-based identity of the organisation. The impact on roles, relationships and institutions at the grassroots levels could not go beyond the achievements of the short-term objectives of the projects.

Chapter Four deals with the Disha Social Organisation (DISHA), which may be seen as the process oriented VDO. The organisation of this chapter is similar to Chapter Three. DISHA began its work as an informal association, with the efforts made by the founder secretary, the founder treasurer, and a few local volunteers. During the initial years, the mode of intervention was guided by the stated ideology of the organisation. The workers used to get adequate space to address the issues raised by the target group. The eventual focus on community *mobilisation* through various means generated a group of activist-cum-workers, which constitute the core group of DISHA. However, the in-coming of projects in a big way during the phase of formalisation and expansion brought *new expectations, new behaviour patterns, and*

new conflicts. Ideological and resource dependence of the organisation on the external funding adversely affected the efforts to follow a consistent mode of intervention guided by its ideology. Greater reliance of DISHA on project-based activities during its later phases, diverted the attention of the leadership from the field, and the activities of the people's fronts. The interaction with the people on their problems reduced significantly. People became more like the recipients of the benefits rather than the active participants in the process of social change and development. Moreover, due to its focus on women's issues, the general image of the organisation developed among the community, and especially among the target group members, is that DISHA is a women's organisation. |

Chapter Five summarises the design and findings of this study. It also presents theoretical and policy implications. This includes a model of the phasic-growth of VDOs, and the concomitant issues. The framework used in this study assumed that as an ideal type, VDOs include the people as an integral part, in all the organisational processes. This, however, introduces multidimensional inconsistencies and ambiguities, which have been amply supported by the findings of this study. These ambiguities are not limited to role specifications (as pointed out by Billis), but they can also be observed in the nature and mode of intervention, the internal interactions, and the interactions with the people. It highlights the existing dilemmas and conflicts in the voluntary sector. The inconsistencies and dilemmas in both the product delivery and process type VDOs tend to become similar during the phase of formalisation and expansion. In these phases, the mode of intervention seems to be governed more by the institutional factors rather than the needs of the people. The associational characteristics are overshadowed by the bureaucratic norms. It may have two theoretical implications. First, the space of ambiguous VDOs (AVDOs) has a tendency to shift towards the space of bureaucracy. This is associated with a parallel reduction in the space of associations, particularly the space of informal association. This shift towards uniformity poses a serious challenge for addressing the problems of plurality of the civil society. Second, the import of externally designed tools and concepts for bringing about social change and development, and their unqualified implementation in the field area leads to the fragmentation of civil society and the alienation of people. They restrict the space for manoeuvring and, consequently, the mode of intervention becomes more or less similar.

The emergence of VDOs owes to both the voluntaristic-individual and deterministic-structural elements. These two factors pre-dominate the decisions on the kind of interventions to be made in the field area. However, besides the perception of the leadership or/and the requirements of the state or donors, the people's own prioritised needs play a crucial role in ensuring the quality of their participation. When the perceived needs of the target groups match with the requirements of the projects launched by the VDO, the people support the interventions. It paves the way for mobilisation, and active participation in the organisational activities. The arena of voluntary action in such a context becomes a public sphere, where the *people* as such, come and join the process, whether they agree with it completely or not. This mode of intervention requires sufficient space to accommodate ground level uncertainties. It also demands adequate time, and a broader interaction space from all the four collectivities.

The lack of such space and restricting the efforts strictly within the boundaries of a project act as major impediments in participative voluntarism. The shift towards the project bound activities heavily reduces the space for interaction with the people. It becomes more focussed and narrow. In this mode of intervention, the other peripheral needs of civil society that arise from time to time pass unaddressed. Consequently, the people are alienated from the activities of the VDO. This project based *particularism* leads to fragmentation of the civil society. The inconsistencies and ambiguities in the nature and mode of intervention compel the target groups and the grassroots workers to deconstruct the meanings of the VDO.

Emphasis on projects makes the VDO appear like a private venture started by the leadership and the paid organisational staff in their own interest. People perceive it as 'their' (i.e. the leadership or the organisational staff's) work and not as 'our' work. This leads to the issue of institutional sustainability of VDOs. The institutional sustainability of VDOs demands a wider role from the leadership. However, their efforts to build up the capacity of the civil society remain confined to building the capacity of the 'organisation and ensuring security and sustenance concerns of the organisation. The internal policy making and governing practices appear to be guided more by adhocism rather than a plan or strategy.

The processes of formalisation and expansion make the actions of functionaries instrumental, lacking voluntaristic innovations and creativity. It brings in the issue of how to manage the organisational change. The increased functional

specialisation between parts of the organisation and extension of hierarchy that separate those who manage the organisation from those who manage field operation, make the approach more focussed. However, the people bring in multiplicity of needs, and have their own constructions of the 'future'. Simultaneously, they also expect some behavioural norms from all those who are actively engaged in such activities. The professional particularism, which aims to enhance the efficiency and effectivity of VDOs strictly through the project-based mode of intervention seems to ignore such norms and values. It adversely affects the motivation and commitment of the grassroots workers. The 'professional' tools, skills and appliances appears to be lacking the human touch. The people develop a narrow understanding about the purpose of voluntarism. Ambiguities, dilemmas, and conflicts associated with the voluntary development sector are thus manifested in different dimensions of action. The concept and the practice of professionalism versus voluntarism, particularistic versus universalistic approach, and the project-oriented versus process-oriented mode of intervention are significant issues, which require innovative solutions.

On the practical front, this study has some implications for the policy makers, the VDOs, and all those who are involved with them. The VDOs, if they aim to strengthen the civil society, must relate their activities with the capacity building of the people in terms of the priorities decided by the people. Excessive or total dependence on external funding heavily guards against any such initiatives. A careful and comprehensive thinking must be exercised from the beginning to make them self-reliant. This will arrest the tendency of abruptly changing their field area and objectives of intervention, and will strengthen their credibility. In this perspective, the donors and other supporters must realise the importance of having a long-term perspective, in which each programme and project should contribute towards the self-sufficiency of the organisation. For this, the people must be allowed to exercise the right to evaluate the performance of the organisation according to their own indicators. Otherwise, shadowing the role of the people in decision making, auditing, and evaluating the performance of the work done by the organisation, would render it nothing more than a private sphere of action limited to a few people. It has been noted that the people's participation changes qualitatively due to the presence of the leadership or/and professional in the field amongst people.

The multiple training inputs given to the grassroots workers and the target groups, in diverse areas do not serve any long-term purpose. The impact of training

should be evaluated in terms of the practicability of its application in the field and sequential requirements of the trainees. Further, better co-ordination should be achieved among the different types of training given to the staff at different points of time. The chapter concludes by making some suggestions for the future research and describing the major limitations of the study.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
ANMs	Auxiliary Nurse and Midwives
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
ATMA	Awareness, Training, Motivation & Action
AVA	Ambiguous Voluntary Agency
AVARD	Association of Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development
AVDOs	Ambiguous VDOs
BDOs	Block development officers
CAGs	Community Action Groups
CAPART	Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CCF	Christian Children Fund
CENDIT	Centre for Development of Instructional Technology
CLWs	Community Level Workers
DISHA	Disha Social Organisation
DMCCC	Dhirendrabhai Mother & Child Care Centre
DVDOs	Delivery type VDOs
EA	Entrepreneurial Associations
FIA	Formal-Informal Association
GA	Government Oriented Associations
GKMM	Ghar Kshetra Mazdoor Morcha
GONGOs	Government Organised Non Government Organisations
ICHP	Integrated Community Health Project
IHP	Integrated Health Project
IRDP	Integrated Rural Development Programme
KVIC	Khadi and Village Industries Commission
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MJS	Mahila Jagriti Samitis
MMLKM	Mahila, Mazdoor evam Laghu Kisan Morcha
MoA	Memorandum of Association
MVDOs	Movement type VDOs

NABARD	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
NGDOs	Non Governmental Development Organisations
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
NSVs	National Service Volunteers
NYK	Nehru Yuva Kendra
PA	Profit Oriented associations
PANI	People's Action for National Integration
PHC	Primary Health Centre
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRIA	Participatory Research in Asia
PRIs	Panchayati Raj Institutions
PUCL	People's Union for Civil Liberties
PVOs	Private Voluntary Organisations
RACHNA	Reproductive and Child Health by Native Action
SEWA	Self Employed Women's Association
SHGs	Self Help Groups
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
TRYSEM	Training of Rural Youths for Self Employment
VDOs	Voluntary Development Organisations
VHAI	Voluntary Health Association of India
VHCs	Village Health Committees
VOLAGs	Voluntary Agencies
VVV	Vikas Volunteer Vahini

GLOSSARY

Baan Mazdoor Samiti	Rope workers' association
Baan	Rope
Behanji	Elder sister
Bhabbhar	A kind of grass grown in Shivalik forest area
Chipko	A case of environmental movements
Chullahs	Ovens
Dai	Midwife
Dalits	The term used for the members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes signifying their downtrodden status
Dhande Matram	Job is God
Ghar	Water deficient region
Gram Swaraj	Village autonomy
Gurukulas	Traditional institutions for imparting education
Karyakarta	Volunteers cum worker
Khadar	The plane region
Khadi	Cloth woven on the spinning wheel
Khunta	Barrier
Kisan Mazdoor Samitis	Association of farmers and labourers
Krishi Vigyan Kendra	Agriculture science centre
Mahila Jagriti Samitis	Women's awareness groups
Mahila Mandals	Women's self help groups
Mahila Samakhya	A programme launched for women's development
Mahila Sangh	Women's group
Mahila sangthan	Women's Association
Panchayat	Refer to village panchayats
Panchayat raj	A system of local governance
Panch-parmeshwar	A voluntary system of solving village dispute by a group of persons
Pattas	Legal document showing the right over a piece of land
Pradhans	Village Chiefs
Pucca	Used for houses made of cement and bricks

Purdha	Veil
Rashtriya Mahila Kosh	National Women's Fund
Ringal	A kind of bamboo
Sahyogini	Women's colleague
Sakhi	Women's friend
Sampurna Saksharta Jatha	Total literacy campaign
Sangha	Village level forums for the women
Sarvodaya	A movement for the upliftment of all
Sathin	Colleague
Vande Matram	Respect to the motherland
Vikas Mandals	Developmental groups
Vikas Volunteer Vahini	Name of a programme
Village Panchayats	The administrative units under the development blocks
Yuva Mandals	Youth groups

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with the statement of the research problem. Based on the available literature on voluntary action, voluntary associations, non-governmental organisations and the related issues, it attempts to develop a conceptual scheme for the study of contemporary voluntary development organisations (VDOs). While reviewing the relevant literature, we have identified two distinct perspectives to look at VDOs in the developing countries. According to the first perspective, they are conceptualised as the agents of the state working to maintain the hegemonic power of the economic and political elite. In this perspective VDOs are looked upon as bureaucratic or corporate organisations. In the second perspective, VDOs are functionaries of the civil society. In the substantive part of the chapter, functions of VDOs in the contemporary socio-political context, their sustenance dilemma, and the capacity building process have been discussed. This is followed by an overview of the changing nature of VDOs in the Indian context. This chapter also identifies the questions raised by social scientists in the study of VDOs. Finally, a conceptual framework is developed to undertake the present study, and the objectives and the major research questions of the study are stated. The chapter ends with a brief description of the organisation of this thesis.

1.1 THE PROBLEM

Veritable mushrooming of VDOs is recognised as one of the most striking features of the change in contemporary society (Dhanagare, 1988; Edwards & Hulme, 1996; Sheth & Sethi, 1991). In the recent past, VDOs have emerged as one of the major social, cultural and ideological actors of civil society. In the developing countries there are hundreds of thousands of non governmental organisations (NGOs) with more than 100 million members (Rich, 1994). Their importance as the agents of social change and development, particularly at the micro level, cannot be ignored. They have been visualised as the potent instruments for building a people-centred

framework of development. They are the new agents of social transformation working along with voluntaristic state, in an age of proletarianisation (Touraine, 1998).

Limitations of the state and the market to deliver development, and provide goods and services to 'all' have led many to look towards civil society. Increasing alienation of people from the process of social change and development has put increasing pressure on civil society to devise new institutions. VDOs, in this context, are seen to have emerged not only to check the declining trend of people's role in their own development but also to strengthen widespread participation of citizens in sustainable development and democratic stability (Tandon, 1997; Hadenius & Ugglä, 1996; Macdonald, 1997; Dhanagare, 1988; Edwards & Hulme, 1996). The VDO boom in the decade of 1980s has become the centre of discourse, policy and programming of national and international development institutions and aid agencies. VDOs have created their own space outside the sphere of state and market.

The studies on VDOs have focussed on two aspects: (a) the nature of their relationships with other agencies of state, market and civil society, and (b) the impact assessment of VDOs in bringing social change and development. Fowler (1991), Fox and Hernandez (1992), Farrington and Lewis (1993) and Radhakrishna (1993) have analysed the role of NGOs in changing state-society relationships. Garain (1994) examined the nature of government-NGO interface in India and emphasised the need for treating NGOs and state as equal partners in the development of poor, deprived and disadvantaged. Dhanagare (1988), Mukherjee (1994), and Finger (1994) studied the role of NGOs in social transformation. In a study on NGOs and the state in Asia in the field of agriculture technology development, Farrington and Lewis (1993) identified and analysed the discrete roles played by NGOs, and the varying responses of governmental organisations. Bebbington & Farrington (1993) observed a likely emergence of closer relationships between NGOs and governments, which will be highly diverse and less clear. Shah (1996) argues that the importance of NGOs lies in their ability to establish supportive relationship with public sector and other development partners. Some of the studies have explored the partnership between UN agencies and civil society. Coate et al. (1996) observed that the fundamental quest of those involved in civil society is the definition of key global values that should guide the daily lives of people. Gordenker (1997) describes the efforts by the United Nations and associated agencies to channel resources to NGOs. Nelson (1997) highlights the lack of consensus-based process between the World Bank's structure

and NGOs' strategies. Raustiala (1997) has surveyed the new participatory roles and offers an analytical framework for understanding the patterns, terms, and significance of for international theory of NGO inclusion.

Studies in the second category have focused on intra-organisational dynamics, its impact and implications on the performance and effectiveness of the VDO. The studies using organisational framework have examined the particular dimension(s) of the organisation, viz., organisational structure, functions, leadership, bureaucratisation and work culture. The studies by Torres et al. (1991), on the effect of bureaucratisation and commitment on resource mobilisation in voluntary agencies; Tandon (1996) on governance and accountability in NGOs; Edwards and Hulme (1996) on NGO performance and accountability; Brett (1993) on efficiency and accountability; Mishra (1990) on effectiveness and work culture in voluntary organisations, Billis (1989) on theory of voluntary sector, and Mahajan (1994) on some practical experiences are some of the significant contributions in this area. Hyman and Kirk (1998) review the monitoring and evaluation system of four NGOs providing business development services to microenterprises in developing countries. The study by Lee (1998) shows that intermediary institutions have played a crucial role in facilitating the development of community capacity to deal with environmental and other communal problems. The literature in this category has also analysed the work of some of the issue-based NGOs such as environmental NGOs, NGOs working on women, health, education, credit services, income generation activities to improve the quality of life and economic status of the rural poor etc., (Potter, 1996; Princen & Finger, 1994; Riddle et al., 1995; Garner, 1991).

It may be noted that the studies in the second category have analysed the intra-organisational processes basically in the Weberian framework of organisation. However, developing an understanding about VDOs has so far ignored their overall structural location and transformative potential (Sheth & Sethi, 1991). According to Billis (1989), the knowledge-base about the voluntary sector is not adequate. Dhanagare (1988) says that Indian sociology has so far missed the phenomenon of action groups and activist groups. Highlighting the diversified nature of NGO sector and the circumstances in which they work, Ahmed (1998) argues the need for more research on NGOs. Clarke (1998) portrays NGOs in developing countries, revealing a fertile, and hitherto neglected, research agenda. A few sociological studies have examined the organisational processes of the voluntary sector in a broad structural

framework. The governance of VDOs has remained an area of limited study (Tandon and George, 1999). There is a need to undertake a study on NGOs in South, which allow comparative analysis by holding the institutional context of the biophysical conditions constant, and varying the nature of NGOs and its interventions (Princen and Finger, 1994). A more comprehensive study on VDOs should also include the people's¹ imaginisation² and perceptions about this social phenomenon, and its impact on the actual working of the VDOs.

Thus, there is a need to go beyond the Weberian framework of organisation, and reflect upon the processes of change in the organisational capacity, the mode of interventions, the nature of interactions among the diverse collectivities, and the attitudes to the management of voluntary sector. Simultaneously, there has been increasing demand for the development of usable ideas, tools, concepts and models that can be applied to the real problems faced by the sector. The present study seeks to fill this gap in literature by undertaking indepth case studies of two grassroots VDOs. They belong to two broad categories of VDOs, which have emerged from the conceptual framework of this study.

1.2 CONCEPTUALISING VOLUNTARY DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS (VDOs)

The term VDO is used interchangeably with voluntary agencies (VOLAGs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), non-party political processes or non-political formations, private voluntary organisations (PVOs), social work agencies, social action groups, community development organisations, charitable trusts etc. The interchangeable use of a wide range of terms reflects the complex nature of the phenomena exhibited by VDOs. They are active from the grassroots level to the national and international level in different roles. They focus upon wide-ranging issues including gender, environment, human rights, social justice, education, health, etc. Depending upon their ideological and philosophical shades, they adopt different modes of intervention in the field. However, this is greatly influenced by their heavy dependence on external funds. Their organisational structures vary widely from a formal bureaucratic type organisation to informal democratic type voluntary

¹ The term 'people' in this thesis has been interchangeably used with the target groups of the VDO.

² A word coined by Morgan (1993) referring to the process of formation and reformation of images within an organisation.

associations. The VDOs have been conceptualised as *voluntary associations* as well as *neo-social movements*. For Rose (1954) VDOs are basically social influence type *voluntary associations* which is directed towards the outside and which take up issues and programmes aiming at, beyond the members of the association per se. On the other hand they have also been conceptualised as the institutionalised representations of neo-social movements initiated around the issue of identity rather than structural roles or class (Gamson, 1987; Panda, 1987; Augustine, 1995). It is, therefore, pertinent to make a conceptual distinction between VDOs, voluntary associations or the community based organisations (CBOs) and the movements.

According to Sills (1968), a voluntary association may be defined as an organised group of persons, which exhibits the following characteristics:

- (1) It is formed in order to further some common interest of its members;
- (2) Membership is voluntary in the sense that it is neither mandatory nor acquired through birth; and
- (3) It exists independently of the state.

Similarly, a community based organisation (CBO) is a type of voluntary association, which is formally accountable to its members (Edwards & Hulme, 1996). They emphasise more on concrete problems and concrete solutions rather than relating them to the abstract ideological and philosophical theorisation (Dhanagare, 1988). They are set up by members, for their own identified purposes. We may, thus note down the following points of variations between voluntary associations and VDOs:

- (1) Voluntary associations are formed in order to further some common interests of their members; VDOs need not necessarily have this characteristic.
- (2) Voluntary associations need not have well defined organisational structure; VDOs necessarily have some form of organisational structure.
- (3) Voluntary associations are comparatively more autonomous as they are not bound to get their association legally registered; VDOs must be legally registered.

Many VDOs actually initiate and encourage the formation of people's associations, CBOs, or voluntary associations to sustain the activities initiated by them. Thus, VDOs may be instrumental in the formation of CBOs but they are not necessarily their carriers. These associations generally carry out activities aiming at bringing broader systemic level changes through mass mobilisation.

Conceptually, VDOs as organisations are distinct from movements. In movements there is no formal organisation. Movements are made up of diverse NGOs, groups and individuals (Potter, 1996). Movements are comparatively more fluid and lack boundaries. Social movement is a more wider concept often been made out of coalitions of several existing organisations (Ahrne, 1994).

Therefore, although VDOs, voluntary associations, and social movements are closely linked, they represent conceptually three different forces of change. To sort out the conceptual ambiguity of the VDO phenomenon, Pandey (1991) has drawn some finer distinctions among different terminologies. The term NGO, according to him, simply distinguishes them from the governmental or quasi-governmental agencies. He qualifies the NGOs working on development issues, mostly with foreign funds as non governmental development organisations (NGDOs). Voluntary agencies (VOLAG) according to him, represent private, non-profit, voluntary organisations dedicated to the design, study and implementation of development projects at the grassroots level. Moreover the NGO is a negative, non-explanatory label which includes private sector institutions, and host of other formations. The term NGO is unclear and defines by what it is not, rather than what it is (Holloway, 1994). In a similar attempt to make conceptual distinction between voluntary agencies and NGOs, Roy (1989) identifies voluntary agencies as essentially non-profit and non-partisan organisations. He distinguishes NGOs from voluntary agencies. For him, co-operatives, trade unions, *panchayat raj*³ institutions and local self-government bodies are non-governmental but they are not voluntary agencies.

While conceptualising this phenomenon, some scholars have emphasised people's action or community action. For example, Pandey prefers the term community action groups (CAGs) as they invariably focus upon the community action. Dhanagare calls the phenomenon of collective action at the grassroots level as *action groups* and has used it interchangeably with the NGOs. We, however, feel that conceptualising VDOs as community action groups or action groups and emphasising on the community action as their major characteristic requires critical evaluation, particularly in the backdrop of the complexity exhibited by the nature of voluntary action during the 1980s and the 1990s.

During the 1980s, voluntary action primarily manifested itself through

³ A framework of decentralised system of self-rule at the village level.

development oriented organisations (Tandon, 1994; Sheth & Sethi, 1991; Brett, 1993). In the recent discourses on social change, voluntary action has been considered as one of the alternatives to promote *development* and the term *voluntary* emphasises the value-rational and normative characteristics of this phenomenon. It has to do more with self-initiative and social commitment. Development oriented voluntary organisations exclude the grassroots level people's formations like *Yuva Mandals*, *Mahila Mandals*, the voluntary associations, the social movements and the funding agencies (PRIA, 1991). Lee (1992) examined NGOs as *development agencies*. Korten (1990) points out that increasing numbers of NGOs are giving attention to the definition and projection of a *people centred development*. We have, therefore, preferred the term VDO.

The VDOs involve organisational characteristics. According to Malkani (1968), "*A voluntary organisation, properly speaking is an organisation - whether its workers are paid or unpaid, initiated and governed by its own members without external control.*" The term *members*, commonly refers to the executive body or the governing body members, who give a *formal shape* and a *legitimate* identity to this phenomenon. VDOs are also perceived as the *formalised* and *legalised* expression and structure of voluntary action for societal development (Mukherjee, 1994). According to Potter (1996), "An NGO is an organisation in the sense that it has at least several full-time people involved, some sort of hierarchy, a budget, an office." However, he also refers to the boundary problems in conceptualising NGOs, and argues that *the boundary between organisation and non-organisation can sometimes be very thin*.

The contemporary VDO phenomenon exhibits certain non-organisational characteristics also, which demand widening its conceptual arena beyond the formal corporate/business or bureaucratic type organisations. The term VDO has many uses and connotations. The difficulty of characterising the entire phenomenon results in large part from the tremendous diversity found in the global VDO community. That diversity derives from differences in size, duration, range and scope of activities, ideology, cultural background, organisational culture, and legal status. Thus it is not always clear, what entities affect the phenomenon most in a given setting (Princen & Finger, 1994). Mohanty (1996) also points out the apparent definitional problems of NGOs citing the diversification in size, forms and objectives. He conceptualises NGOs as one of the alternatives in the backdrop of increasing problems of the Third World and the perceived failure of national governments to effectively promote

development and to raise the standard of living of the poor. He, however, does not discuss about the nature, form and position of this new alternative.

Following Weber (1961a), the 'corporate organisation' may be defined as an associative social relationship characterised by an administrative staff devoted to a system of continuous purposive activities. However, in case of VDOs, the associative social relationships cannot be characterised solely by the administrative staff. They include wider network of relationships outside the administrative structure, which have a crucial role to play in the working of the voluntary organisation. The phenomenal growth of voluntary sector during the past two decades has added new dimensions to this phenomenon. What started as an act of welfare or/and charity at the individual level or by some form of voluntary association has changed, expanded, and diversified considerably over the years. The increasing flow of money into this sector, especially since 1980 has considerably changed the nature of collective voluntary action at the grassroots levels. The diversion of funds from the macro-structure towards the micro-structures was underpinned by the philosophy of ensuring *people's participation* in the process of *development* through the institutions close to the people. However, the conceptualisation of this phenomenon as an organisation in the conventional sense, eludes a comprehensive explanation on the role of VDOs in the radically changed social reality. In the contemporary socio-political context, VDOs are not being looked upon merely as an *agent* or *organisation* of development or welfare. They have emerged and come to stay for achieving the broader goal of strengthening the civil society. There is a need to re-look voluntarism in a wider ambit, and situate the NGOs in a wider structural framework to capture their new characteristics (Bakshi, 1996).

Recently, some scholars and activists have conceptualised VDOs as the *civil society organisations*. Characterising them as part of civil society implies that they are different from the corporate/bureaucratic organisation either in terms of their autonomy and flexibility with respect to their internal organisational affairs or in terms of their being a non-profitable entity, established for some social cause. They should be looked upon as autonomous public-space of non-party political process outside the space of state and market (Oommen, 1996). They are autonomous in the sense that they are initiated spontaneously, at least at the level of persons who form them, and are governed by their members without any external control and compulsion. This conceptualisation challenges the tendency of visualising VDOs as a

sphere of private activity. It also takes them beyond the restrictive economic notion of VDOs as exemplified by notions like the 'non-profitable' (Tandon, 1994). It may, however, be noted that the new public-private sphere created by altruistic civic associations like the NGOs, is dependent on pressures and influences that endanger the benefits that these associations may otherwise bring to society and to the quality of citizen's participation (Giner & Sarasa, 1996).

In the backdrop of the above discussions, we may claim that VDOs are expression of value-rational action rather than organisational-instrumental action in civil society. As an ideal type, their authority resides in the *collectivity* as a whole, delegated if at all, only temporarily and subject to recall, and in which rules are minimal (Rothschild – Whilt Joyce, 1979). The organised space of a VDO contains three broad collectivities: (a) the *executive body* which initiates it, (b) the group of paid and unpaid *workers and volunteers* who are engaged in the implementation of various programmes and policies, and (c) the *target group* whose participation is sought in every operational activity of the organisation. VDOs, therefore, can be conceptualised as the *organised and legitimised manifestation of collective value-rational action in civil society*. They ensure collective action with mutually agreed upon division of responsibilities for smooth functioning of the organisation, and for achieving their goals efficiently. The basic goal of these organisations is to improve the quality of life of their target groups. They gather resources from the members/community, and/or also receive grants from the governmental and non-governmental agencies to sustain their activities. VDOs in India are legally registered under the Society Registration Act (1860), the Indian Trust Act (1882), the Company Act (1956), or the Co-operative Societies Act (1926).

1.3 VOLUNTARY DEVELOPMENT SECTOR: TWO PARADIGMS

Collective voluntary action directed towards the welfare and development of individuals, groups, and community is not a new social phenomenon. However, in the recent past, its form and nature has changed significantly. What started as a pure informal initiative, has crystallised into a structured, formal and organised intervention for social change, and resulted in the VDO phenomenon. Although VDOs operate within the autonomous space of civil society, their actions and roles are affected by the state and the market. The emergence of VDOs in post-colonial, less

developed countries has been conceptualised in a dialectical framework. There are two basic paradigms to look at the voluntary action in its contemporary form. The first paradigm conceptualises the VDOs as an instrument of the capitalist state or/and the market forces. Accordingly, they help the state and the market by creating illusions of people's emancipatory action. The second paradigm views them as the functionaries of civil society. According to this paradigm, VDOs as the agents of civil society check the hegemonic tendencies of the state, and try to fill-in the gap created by the failures of state or market in fulfilling the people's expectations. The main features of the two paradigms are presented below.

1.3.1 Voluntary Development Sector: An Instrument of the Capitalist State

The recent emergence of VDOs in the post-colonial, less developed countries has been seen by many scholars as the outcome of increasing support to this sector by the state and market agencies. This trend has been analysed both ways, favourably and critically. Mahajan (1999) argues that the state alone can create conditions necessary to protect the institutions of civil society from internal disruptions. He argues against detaching civil society from the state. Civil society, according to him, is very much a part of democratic constitutional state. The development of VDOs - nurturing civil society, however, is not a smooth evolutionary process. It is related to several socio-economic, political and organisational problems rooted in the history, constitution and international world order. There is a sense of fear that in some circumstances VDOs may even weaken or damage the spirit of voluntary action. We may call them as the *predatory* VDOs. They may manifest as voluntary organisations but their role is to help the capitalistic, or the hegemonic state. According to Kothari (1990) the voluntary sector is marked by two contradictory trends: on the one hand the increasing participation of the VDOs in government planning and programmes, and on the other hand, increasing attack on the voluntary sector. He believes that government's entry into non-government sectors and voluntary sector's entry into government sector has always crippled *voluntarism*. To quote,

The fact that many of the more radical social movements and organisations of dissent and protest against the government have also adopted a voluntary and non-party, non-government form, has further legitimised the NGO format. It is a smart cooptative move that increases the sophistication of the new capitalist thrust. Little did the

early advocates of the voluntary sector realise to what use their concepts could be put to one day. The irony of it, of course, is that by hijacking the socio-economic terrain as against the State bureaucracy, the 'new look' State will also be able to marginalise and be ruthless with those elements in the voluntary space that refuses to fall in line, are 'too political' or are unwilling to accept the disciplines imposed by a capitalist corporate State- and the no less 'corporate' NGO that it has been spawning under the impact of the new thinking on the role of State.

Kothari questions the justification of supporting voluntary sector by the capitalist state or the foreign funding agencies. He looks at the latter as the agent of the transnational market forces. He asserts that the state in post-colonial societies has failed in its role to provide welfare and ensure the development of all. The regulation of the voluntary sector through various legislative measures has been seen as a move to co-opt them. Dasgupta (1996) also delineates similar trends in the voluntary sector. For him, the NGOs kowtow before the donors, and the donors work according to a plan held together by secret motives. The rationale for such agencies in the name of 'people's participation' has been seen as a rhetoric for legitimising actions that in fact destroy the resource base of civil society, and exclude the people from the actual process of change and development. Even the attempt to devise a code of conduct for the voluntary organisations got mixed up with the government's attempt at taming and co-opting voluntary organisations (Anonymous, 1995)

VDOs in this perspective are visualised as the artificially generated mechanical structures rather than an organic part of civil society. They help the state latently through creating legitimacy and helping in its humane projects. They flourish on the privileges and funds offered to them by the government and the foreign donors. In reciprocal gesture, they do not question the larger policy thrust of government actions. In the process these VDOs are used by the state to further the capitalist interests.

1.3.2 VDOs as Functionaries of Civil Society

The Post-Marxist scholars have been exploring and analysing the increasing role of de-class and civil society in social transformation. Citizen's participation at the world scale is an unprecedented phenomenon. The realisation is growing that governments and markets alone can no more solve the global issues facing humankind. Instead of the 'class' (viz. the class-consciousness, the class mobilisation

etc), it is the civil society, which has emerged as the focal area of scientific exploration. VDOs are seen as one of the crucial institutions of the people within civil society leading to the people's participation, people's empowerment, and people's mobilisation. They have no fixed address. They seek neither converts nor political militants. Their target is not to capture the state but to strengthen civil society or citizen's role. At their centre are the citizens in the unfolding global drama of the contemporary society (Oliviera and Tandon, 1994).

After the publication of Antonio Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks*, and later on the swift moving changes in the Central and Eastern Europe in the late 1970s and 1980s, the concept of civil society has renewed its appeal. Civil society has emerged as one of the three most important autonomous actors in the post-colonial and post-socialist society, besides the state and the market (Oommen, 1996). The importance of a vigorous civil society for democratic stability and performance has been stressed increasingly during the last few years (Hadenius and Uggla, 1996). In the development community, civil society has emphatically manifested itself through the world of VDOs working at the grassroots level, and activists who voice concerns on issues like gender inequality, protection of environment, human rights, development with a human face, cultural diversity etc (Amalric, 1996). VDOs are seen as one of the normative organisations through which political opinions have been expressed in the backdrop of the alleged failure of party politics to fulfil the people's expectations. This veiled an indirect mode of collective expression as a central element of the politics in the developing countries (Seppala, 1992).

The late twentieth century society is characterised by weakening of social, political, ideological and legal controls, respect for human rights, and individuation (Touraine, 1998). This is certainly true for the developed countries, and this is also the direction in which less developed countries are moving. State is increasingly adopting liberal policies for its survival. Civil society is growing as a grey zone between the state and the people to check and balance the roles and positions of the state and the invisible market. For example, Lee (1992) delineates two major forces, which are driving the creation and the growth of NGOs in South Africa. First, there is an increasing commitment to development on the part of all actors. Second, there is collapse of statism and state supported development throughout the world, and increasing importance of NGOs in strengthening civil society. In this context, NGOs have been portrayed as the Third Sector *vis-à-vis* the Public Sector and the Private

Sector. Voluntary sector comprising a large network of voluntary agencies, associations, social action groups, interests and pressure groups have a decisive and vital role to play in bringing about a planned socio-economic development and nation building in developing societies like India. There is a need to appreciate and accommodate the NGOs as legitimate and dynamic institutions of civil society (Bava, 1997). There are several reasons behind the rise of VDOs as the new agents of change and development. Some of them are as follows:

1. Increased recognition and flow of resources to actors of civil society.
2. A feeling among international donors that in many areas of development and change, community rather than state can be more effective.
3. State support to voluntary action as it speeds up development by bypassing bureaucracy, and in areas where the state's reach is limited.
4. Critique of development theory and a growing recognition of the limits of modernisation paradigm.
5. Postmodern approach towards emancipation and advocacy of diverse identities other than class.

Voluntary development organisations in this paradigm supposedly live in a situation of distrust and suspicion with relation to the government machinery, particularly at the local level. The government, particularly the bureaucracy at the local level, often looks down upon the alternative measures used by VDOs to promote development and welfare. The paradigm envisages alternative social relations and systems. For Ichiyo (1994) VDOs are seen working all over the world for the empowerment of the grassroots. Bakshi (1996) conceptualises NGOs as one of the means to transform the socio-cultural system, and eradicate poverty. For him, the VDOs aim at the empowerment of the people.

Thus, we find a wide diversity of arguments for and against the regulation and control of VDOs by the state. Marx and Gramsci, conceptualised the institutions and organisations of civil society as instruments of state, which are primarily used by the ruling class to maintain its hegemony over society. In this perspective many authors visualised VDOs as another instrument used by the state, in disguise of promoting and strengthening civil society. Kothari talks of government organised non government organisations (GONGOs) setting the model for all NGOs. However, Kumar (1996) argues, that the swift-moving changes in Central and Eastern Europe in the late 1970s and 1980s, gave new life to the concept of civil society. In contemporary society

citizenship appears to depend for its exercise on active participation in non-state institutions. Also VDOs often take confrontational stand against the excessive interference of the state machinery into the affairs of VDOs. For example, there are VDOs like Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) which co-operates with the state agencies in formulating policies and programmes for women belonging to the weaker sections of society. They readily accept funds from the government agencies. Nonetheless, depending upon the grassroots situations they often take confrontational stand against the local bureaucracies. Thus, a categorical labelling of VDOs *vis-a-vis* the state is highly problematic.

Similarly, the sudden influx of money into this sector in a big way is sometimes looked upon as the well-planned strategy of the multinational market forces (Kothari, 1990). It is argued that through this, the latter tries to establish a market for their product by supporting specific sectors like family planning and reproductive health. They also wish to control the vast natural resources of the Third World countries. However, presenting VDOs in this way, as a market friendly agent is again questionable. For example, a number of VDOs directly question the ethics of promoting high consumerism, commercialisation of all spheres of life, and the stiff competition by the market.

Thus, on the one hand, it is argued that the rationale for highlighting the role of NGOs lacks conceptual innovation, particularly in Indian context (Gupta, 1996). They seem to be an evidence of either the state's inability to deliver or the large influx of money from the developed countries to support these organisations. On the other hand, it is also being seen as a conceptual innovation of civil society. According to Sharma (1996), the social movements particularly relating to the problems of women, industrial and agricultural workers, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes⁴, to the problem of state's inefficiency, and disenchantment with its declared goals, have paved the way for the emergence of VDOs in the post-independent India. The debate around the nature of state-VDOs-market relationship, their relative role-importance in the overall societal framework, and the extent of control and regulation one exercises over another continues to remain unresolved.

⁴ The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are ethnic groups, which have been identified by the Indian Government for the policy of protective discrimination.

1.4 NATURE AND MODE OF INTERVENTION

The social systems, institutions, and the cultural settings in which VDOs exist, heavily influence their structures, roles, effectiveness, social impacts and relationships with other agencies. VDOs differ widely among themselves with respect to their ideological shades, sizes, levels of work, and linkages. This reflects variously in their nature and mode of intervention at the field level. VDOs active at the grassroots level, primarily confine themselves to the local situations. However, they do tend to relate these concrete grassroots realities to ideological abstractions or philosophies, designed and discussed at the time of establishing the organisation and mentioned in the memorandum of association (MoA).

These philosophies and abstractions are attempted to be actualised by initiating concrete actions and activities at the grassroots level. Based on the empirical observations and variations the *nature of intervention* may be classified as (a) relief and charity; (b) development work; (c) mobilisation and organisation; (d) politics; and (e) political education (Dhanagare, 1988). Similarly depending upon their *mode of intervention*, VDOs can be categorised as (a) charity oriented VDOs, (b) product delivery type VDOs, and (c) process oriented VDOs. However, a pure breed of VDO falling exclusively under one of the above categories, is a rarity.

VDOs are active at various *levels*. At the international or national level, they usually act as donors or advocacy agents. VDOs active at the intermediary level provide training and other inputs for the capacity building of the grassroots organisations, and the local initiatives. At the grassroots level they are extensively engaged in resolving various socio-economic problems. In the recent past, numerous issue-specific organisations have come up dealing with environment, health, women, human rights, consumer's protection etc.

On the basis of *size*, a study by an NGO called Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA, 1991) classifies the VDOs into four categories, namely, the small VDOs, medium VDOs, big VDOs, and large VDOs. In the Indian context, small VDOs are numerically the most predominant one. They work in a few villages within a development block⁵ or in a few selected urban slums (in one part of a city). They have generally many part timers, volunteers and a few full time staff. The medium size VDOs tend to cover one or more development blocks in rural areas, or a couple of

⁵ Development blocks are the administrative units within a district.

slums in a city. They may have about ten full-time staff. The big VDOs would be employing between 25 to 50 full time staff at different levels, covering several districts or cities. In this study, we may call all the above three categories as grassroots VDOs. The large size VDOs would have staff size in the range of 100 or more. They are fewer in number in India today.

At the grassroots level, VDOs can also be seen intervening in different *roles*. They may be summarised as follows:

1. VDOs make adaptations in the application of schemes planned by the government at the micro level to specifications considering local requirements.
2. Supporting the actions/programmes carried out by the government agencies.
3. Providing alternative approach to government policies and programmes, addressing different problems of the target groups.
4. Develop backward and forward linkages for enhancing the effectiveness of their own and the government in undertaking development opportunities.
5. Supplement government efforts, particularly in reaching out to less accessible target groups and at times complement existing services in response to the other needs of the same target groups (Garain, 1994).

Strategies and mode of intervention of the VDOs have never been stated in precise forms. In any organisation, one can clearly see the mixing of many worldviews and strategies, often leading to confusion and ambiguity. Although they all intervene in the name of improving the quality of life of the people, they usually differ in their manifest ideology and mode of intervention. Some of the VDOs advocate the need for undertaking a mobilising stand. They emphasise on generating and mobilising people's opinion and people's power to influence and accelerate the mainstream transformative political process (AVARD, 1991). In the 1980s, many NGOs began to take mobilisation stand to articulate local social and environmental interests on a world-wide scale (Rich, 1994). Some other VDOs emphasise the welfare work.

It is argued that the movement type VDOs have not been proved sustainable in the absence of adequate livelihood, employment and income generation (LEIG) activities for the poor and needy in a country where increasing proportion of population feels alienated and marginalised (Mahajan, 1994). Consequently, some social activists stress that there is a need for *large investment* and some *expertise* in a few subsectors (to be chosen on the basis of available social and other resource capitals in the locality where VDOs are working) to carry on LEIG activities on

appropriate economy of scale. However, it may be said that keeping in mind the magnitude of the problem, VDOs (particularly in case of India) are not in a position to substitute state altogether in delivering development in the foreseeable future. In the name of developing expertise, VDOs have armed themselves with lap-top computers, faxes, and modems and have formed powerful, responsive networks with national groups and international NGOs. However, while building network at the macro-level, often VDOs fail to appreciate the importance of developing proper networking and co-ordination with the other intervening agents active at the micro-level in the area. They fail to realise that building new institutions without taking existing social structure into account may bring chaos and social unrest to a community (Hadenius and Ugglä, 1996). For example, in India almost each and every village has experienced some or other form of interventions in the name of welfare and development. Be it by the state, market, or civil society agencies. These interventions have left both positive and negative impacts on the individuals and the community. Any fresh interventions by a VDO, without taking into account these ramifications may possibly lead to more chaos and uncertainty.

The nature and mode of intervention adopted by the grassroots VDOs have also been analysed in the backdrop of increasing dependence on foreign funding and state sponsorship. Scholars have argued the need for redefining and reconceptualising the roles of grassroots VDOs in this context. They need to (a) revise current notions that they operate as agents of popular transformation and facilitators of countervailing power, (b) review their position within the future political economy of the poor Southern states, and (c) recognise that the self financing will remain an illusion unless Northern donors significantly change their funding practices. In this broad context, the voluntary sector has been continuously organising and reorganising itself (Fowler, 1992).

The above discourse on the complexity of voluntary sector underlines the problems in constructing a viable theory of VDOs. The historical diversity of voluntary action, and distinctiveness of the development of VDOs in different socio-political and cultural contexts defy a simple theoretical construction. The overall complexity of the contemporary voluntary development organisations would undeniably render untenable any categorical classification and generalisation.

1.5 SUSTENANCE DILEMMA AND CAPACITY BUILDING

The complexity of the roles and relationships existing in the voluntary development sector is closely associated with the issue of sustenance dilemma and capacity building. The changing socio-economic and political situations in their various dimensions have created greater opportunities for the involvement of voluntary organisations and groups for the welfare and development of the country (Mukherjee, 1994). At the macro level, the processes of education and politicisation have resulted in an unprecedented increase in people's aspirations. Strong currents of consumerism, and cut-throat competition are the dominant market forces, which subject local production to severe competition. Many signs of social change have turned into distress signals (Radhakrishna, 1993). Thus the effectiveness of VDOs depends upon the nature of interplay of various forces on the macro, the intermediary and the micro planes. Voluntary sector needs to perceive them in time, to face the challenges, and initiate actions to change their structure and work culture keeping in view the needs and requirements based upon certain laid down principles.

In the Indian context, there are conflicting opinions on the issue of funding. One line of thought criticises the acceptance of *excessive* foreign funding. Some activists term this as a well planned exploitative strategy of transnational market forces. In the name of VDOs, capitalist forces intend to control the vast natural resources and the trade of the Third World countries in collusion with the state of these countries (Kothari, 1990). However, another line of thought supports the selective acceptance of the foreign funds. The supporters of this qualified acceptance of foreign fund do not see anything ethically or logically wrong in accepting foreign funds, if the intentions of the donors do not clash with the interests of the people. They proclaim that it is better to receive funds from foreign donor agencies without compromising their ideology rather than from the state. Some social activists argue that if government and private corporate sector can openly accept foreign money, what is wrong if voluntary sector does so (Dhanagare, 1988). Ramamurthy (1999), for example, justifies the dependence upon external grants only for welfare activities such as public health and education. The socio-economic projects, according to him, must be approached with an attitude to ensure economic sustainability and consequently a long-term social development.

There is a third line of thought, which is quite radical. It outrightly opposes

any external funding. It even criticises the tendency of over-dependence on state funding. The tendency to seek funds from the outside, according to them, goes against the principle of village autonomy and self-rule (Interview with Secretary of Association of Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development; AVARD and Editor *Gandhi Marg*, Hindi Version). It is argued that the easy availability of money has often been a source of many problems. It leads to isolation and alienation of organisation as it tends to generate secretive nature, and to move away from an open culture and mutual trust. It also forces the VDOs to become bureaucratic (Radhakrishna, 1993). NGOs usually come under pressure as an impact of accepting foreign fund (Tripathi, 1997).

Criticising the general trend in the contemporary voluntary development sector, Singh (1995) accuses that most of the organisations are money and power oriented. Material gain is the primary motive, and service has become secondary. Appropriation of funds and bossism are common phenomena. In this context, he emphasises the need to adhere to ideologies, like the Gandhian concepts of 'selfless service', 'public bank', public accountability', 'iron discipline', and 'high moral character' in the life styles of VDOs. Similarly, Macdonald (1997) criticises NGOs for perpetuating paternalism, dependency and the marginalisation. He argues that NGOs basically need to support social movements to express the demands of the people at the grassroots. However, Fowler (1992) observes that a majority of NGOs does require external funds, and to mobilise local resources for the community development in situations of abject poverty is extremely difficult. For him, the dependence of Southern NGOs on the surplus derived from the Northern economies seems to continue in the near future. Accepting this truth, Mohanty (1996) emphasises that the relations between the Northern and Southern NGOs should be based on an equal partnership incorporating a new sense of transparency, mutual accountability, trust and risk sharing and long term commitment for development.

The debate on the sustenance dilemma is closely related to the concurrent debate on the capacity building process. The concept of capacity building of civil society as presented and described in the literature needs critical evaluation. Basically, capacity has multidimensional and complex attributes. Tandon (1997) has related the capacity of VDOs with the totality of an organised effort. It includes all those inputs, which are necessary to improve the overall efforts of the organisation. He has identified the following eight dimensions of civil society. They are: (a)

programme/project management capacity, (b) human resource development capacity, (c) systems capacity, (d) physical capacity, (e) information capacity, (f) relational capacity, (g) strategic capacity, and (h) renewal capacity. He, however, seems to miss the analysis of this concept from the people's perspective.

It is emphasised that in the process of building their capacity, VDOs need a good deal of reflection on their role, vision, affirmation of identity as well as taking strategic decisions on how to secure the autonomy of their funding base. According to activists the overall objective of VDOs should be people's empowerment and confidence building. *People* are supposed to be of primary concern for the VDOs. Clarity about their objectives, methodologies, vision, values, and their own view of development is essential for VDOs to play an effective role. In the National Convention of Voluntary Activists (Feb 22-24, 1996) organised in New Delhi, the need for sustained efforts to generate local resources was emphasised. It is therefore, pertinent to analyse the process of capacity building and also to look how different collectivities perceive this. Thus the capacity building process of VDOs as the civil society agencies is seen closely associated with the empowerment of the people at large.

1.6 CHANGING NATURE OF VDOs IN INDIA

Associating voluntarily on issues related to public concerns has an age-old Indian tradition. Welfare or charity oriented collective voluntary action is not a new phenomenon. For example, this phenomenon of natural voluntarism can be seen in the age-old tradition of '*gurukulas*' (traditional institutions for imparting education and knowledge in India). The system of '*panch-parmeshwar*⁶' reflects the spirit of voluntarism used to solve the village disputes. The concept of '*gram swaraj*' (village autonomy) has underpinnings in the philosophy of people's empowerment by the people themselves. The transformation of this natural voluntarism from an organic part of society into a distinct sector (what is now called the voluntary 'sector') started after the intervention by the state (Sheth & Sethi, 1991). In this context, the enactment of the Societies Registration Act 1860, by the British Government is seen by many scholars as an attempt by the state to instrumentalise and control the natural voluntary action. A new phenomenon of registered voluntary organisations emerged for

⁶ A voluntary system of solving village dispute by a group of persons.

undertaking any organised social work outside the space of family. Since then, many other Acts have been promulgated to regulate and guide varied non-governmental, developmental activities (Interview with Secretary, AVARD, New Delhi).

In pre-independence India, voluntary organisations were polarised primarily in pro-government and pro-nationalist terms. While the former concentrated largely on social reforms, the latter combined the social change and political transformation. In the post-independence India, initially this sector was primarily supplanting the state through activities like *Khadi* (cloth woven on the spinning wheel, and part of Gandhian movement), *Sarvodaya*, (a movement for the upliftment of all) and various relief and welfare activities. Gradually, it included the programmes and activities for sustainable development and people's mobilisation in a big way. The voluntary sector in the post-independence India has seen an increasingly active role of VDOs in the development activities, particularly at the micro level. The nature of these VDOs and their roles, however, has changed significantly in 1980s and 1990s.

A more elaborate description of the history and roles of VDOs in India has been presented in a study conducted by PRIA (1991). It identifies seven phases of voluntary action since the 19th century. The *First Phase (1800-1850)* was marked by the initiation of various reform movements, which inspired many people to do something for the rights of deprived and marginalised. During the *Second Phase (1850-1900)*, spread of nationalist consciousness and self help emerged as the primary focus of socio-political movements and influenced the future course of voluntary action. The *Third Phase*, which continued upto 1947 (i.e., till India became independent) witnessed the process of channelising the voluntary spirit for political action and mass mobilisation for the struggle of independence. Gandhi's initiation of 'Constructive Work' activities between 1922-28, was another major factor, which was to influence the nature of voluntary action in the future. The *Fourth Phase* started after independence, and continued till mid 60s. During this phase, many in the stream of social reform based voluntary action, and the stream of constructive work joined hands with the government in the nation building operation. It resulted in formalisation of the social work, and its co-optation by the state. During this phase, another stream of social reform based voluntary action emerged in the form of social work and institution of higher education set up for training young people in social work. The underlying perspective continued to remain the welfare of the people. The *Fifth Phase*, between mid sixties and early seventies, was the period when the

development model followed by the government came under severe criticism. During this period, professionally trained youngsters also began to enter voluntary development organisations, setting up new initiatives. The next phase (i.e., the *Sixth Phase*) refers to the period from the clamping of National Emergency in 1975 upto early 1980s. The period witnessed a series of political turmoil, which forced many people to critically reflect their experiences, and the emerging political trends in the country. The fall out of this critical assessment contributed to the quality and quantity of voluntary action in the country. The ideas of conscientisation and people's participation began to emerge. Also sectoral specialisation in health, agriculture, education, literacy, etc., gained momentum in this period. The *Seventh Phase (from 1980 onward)* began to witness the growth in voluntary action at other levels, like support organisations specialising in training, advocacy, documentation, legal aid, networks, alliances, etc. A more professional approach to development characterised the work of voluntary organisation in this period.

Similarly, analysing the development of action groups in India, Dhanagare refers to three stages (or generations) namely, the *stage of social welfarism*, the *stage of radical nationalism*, and the *stage of socialist orientation*. During the first stage, the voluntary agencies subscribe to the notion of state directed welfarism, and they involve with the community as social workers at the micro level. During the second phase of development, the action groups engage in building alternative structures through mass mobilisation. During the third stage, the action groups work for building alternative social order through localised struggle of marginalised sections.

Kothari (1990) has also examined VDOs in generational terms. He classified VDOs active in post-independent India into three generations; each generation characterised by its particularities. They are:

Generation I: It includes non-party political agencies engaged in whole range of constructive work activities, which were carried out before independence by the Congress movement. Those Congressmen, who did not join the main stream politics and decided to carry the *Gandhian* mission of *sarvodaya* and *gram-swaraj*, initiated rural reconstruction through such agencies.

Generation II: It includes social work agencies in rural areas. Many of these agencies were supported by the social-democratic state in the framework of community development and *Panchayat Raj*.

Generation III: It includes radical programs like employment-guarantee schemes, adult education, etc. primarily aimed at conscientising and empowering the people.

In a similar attempt, Radhakrishna, (1993) classified VDOs into relief and welfare organisations, community development organisations, sustainable system development organisations, and people's movements. According to Radhakrishna they emerged in successive generations of voluntary action in response to evolving forces of development and proletarianisation.

Mahajan's (1994) classification of VDOs into four distinct types is very much similar to the above categories, and exhibits the generational perspective. He has categorised them as follows: (a) relief agencies active in emergency, (b) welfare services such as health care, primary education to poor, (c) awareness building organisations (in 1970s) attacking the structural underpinning of poverty; and (d) livelihood, employment, and income generation oriented organisations (in 1980s). Bowden, (1990) and associates in a study on VDOs in Asia have classified VDOs into four types: consulting VDOs, welfare VDOs, development VDOs and advocacy VDOs.

However the concrete realities of the complexities among the contemporary VDOs in India would undeniably render any general classification unacceptable. Voluntary action in different parts of India has been rooted in a specific socio-political context. It was inspired by the emergence and continuity of social reforms, social change, and political movements in different parts of the country. VDOs across the board, have their own specific perspectives, priorities and strategies. In a study, PRIA (1991) has delineated three main parameters to develop a typology of VDOs. They are *Inspiration, Rationale and Size*. Inspiration refers to the nature of inspiration of the founder(s). In other words it signifies the philosophical, ideological, intellectual or religious *inspiration*. This category includes three broad types of VDOs based on the inspiration from *Gandhian School, Socialist School, and the Marxist and neo-Marxist school*. *Rationale* refers to the assumptions behind the VDO. On the basis of rationale, the study identifies four broad types of VDOs. The first type is based on the rationale that *people need help*. The second type called *developmentalist*, focus on people who could develop on their own with the support of the VDO. The third type is based on the theme of *empowerment*. The fourth type believes in the need for *support and influence at different levels* from the grassroots to the national and international levels.

It may be noted that in the decade after 1975, the failure of bringing social transformation through party based politics, brought disenchantment among many political activists, and raised many controversies in India. This led some of the activists to join the stream of non-party politics of civil society by associating themselves primarily with the voluntary development sector. The movement groups of social activists multiplied into thousands, and spread into different parts of the country. They were latter crystallised into apolitical VDOs to work on long term basis. These groups are now led by the youths from the middle or lower middle class. They take up various causes on behalf of the marginalised population of the *dalits*, the tribals, the landless and the women. They work in small area for the goal they describe as 'empowerment of the people' (Sheth, 1993).

During the past two decades, a combination of external and internal factors are responsible for the VDO boom and their changing nature in India. Externally, there has been a change in the policies of donor agencies (both, public agencies, e.g., UN agencies, state funding agencies under bilateral agreements and private funding agencies). Now they encourage and support VDOs from South, instead of the government of these countries in the development works of different kinds. Internally, there has been a growing realisation on the part of the state about its limitations in delivering developmental inputs into remote areas, and ensuring people's participation in these activities. In examining the state-VDOs interface in India, it is important to examine the process through which the government has been directing and controlling the contribution of VDOs (for example, through funding literacy work, *Krishi Vigyan Kendras* for agriculture, work for handicapped, etc.) in the country's development process. Since the beginning of the First Five Year Plan, the government has explicitly recognised the significance of VDOs in the country's development efforts. However, the concept of VDOs, their importance, and their role expectations have undergone a significant change over different Five Years Plans. While in the earlier decades, the government planned for the voluntary sector, and funded its own schemes, in the latter period government encouraged the VDOs to plan for themselves and advanced financial assistance to schemes proposed by them.

Whatever be the intrinsic nature of the VDOs, whether they are welfare, consulting, development, or advocacy and movement type, they largely seem to depend heavily upon the project-based professionalism and the external fund based particularism. Consequently, they construct their own space of perception and action.

This space constitutes their own universality within which they try to work for the welfare, development, and empowerment of the particularities such as *dalits*, women, poor, and other deprived sections of society. Although majority of VDOs working in India are still of welfare or development delivery type, nonetheless, the recent trends show the emergence of consulting type VDOs, and VDOs which accept and accord equal importance to people's mobilisation, conscientisation, empowerment. The latter among the recent breeds of VDOs work with poor communities primarily in rural areas, engaged in providing a range of developmental inputs and building self-help capabilities. Concurrently, there has been an increase in the involvement of professionals within VDOs. Kurup (1991) argues in favour of professionalisation of voluntarism to introduce professional competence and managerial expertise. Tripathi (1997), however, asserts that primary motive behind the incoming of professionals having a degree in Social Work, Rural Management or Sociology in the voluntary sector on a large scale is for pursuing a career and seeking comforts. He criticises the contradictions between their actions and arguments.

However, the conflicts raised due to the trends of increasing activism in voluntary action for social transformation, and increasing professionalisation of VDOs for greater success, effectiveness and impact within the existing system continues unresolved (notwithstanding a good many successful cases of struggle and development) (AVARD, 1991). It is more visible in the younger and more idealistic organisations (Giner & Sarasa, 1996). The emergence of new trends and dynamics in the VDOs of India has, thus given rise to a new agenda. In the following section, we present the essential features of the emerging agenda of VDOs in India, and some academic questions that it has posed.

1.7 EMERGING AGENDA AND QUESTIONS OF SOCIOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The agenda for VDOs are different in the North and South. This study limits its discussion to the VDOs of the South in general, and VDOs of India in particular. Broadly speaking, the agenda before the voluntary sector can be discussed with regard to three main issues, which are: (a) the issues relating to the position and relationships of VDOs as civil society institutions with the state and the market, (b) the dynamics of relationships of VDOs with the other institutions of civil society like, networks of

VDOs, social movements, voluntary associations, donors, political parties, family, etc., and (c) the issues pertaining to the internal organisational processes of VDOs.

These three broad categories are not mutually exclusive. They have led to practical and theoretical discussions on the issues of the kind and mode of interventions, sustenance, and capacity building of VDOs. In the previous sections, we have identified and raised many anomalies and unresolved issues. We have also highlighted the ambiguous nature of VDOs. In a study on action groups, Dhanagare(1988) has raised the following issues of sociological relevance:

1. Present conditions prevailing in the state and civil society, i.e., structure and institutions, and the kind of transformations they are undergoing.
2. Adequacy and soundness of the model of the state directed development founded on an unstated ideological assumption of mixed capitalist economy blended with the stated choice of a participatory democracy.
3. The nature of relationship between the mainstream politics of civil society, and the new grassroots politics of masses stirred and awakened by activist groups/VDOs.
4. The role of middle class professionals and intellectuals in verbalising grievances and issues of the marginalised/oppressed.
5. Presence or absence of the specialised category of intellectuals associated with the social groups (VDOs/masses/classes).
6. The way, VDOs perceive and analyse the present day crisis and contradictions.
7. Mode of intervention and participatory research.
8. Sustenance dilemma: foreign funds and VDOs.

In a similar kind of study, Sheth & Sethi, (1991) have listed following questions to be explored in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of VDOs:

1. Does the growing support to VDOs imply a dilution of the welfare functions of the state?
2. Does it imply a growth of private enterprise in the country?
3. What does a proliferation of activists do to the political parties and the political process?
4. Does increasing funding, governmental and foreign, lead to a decline in self-reliance and community orientation?
5. Is the growth of the VDO sector reflective of a decentralised mode of increasing state control over society?

6. How does the intervention by a VDO change/modify/redefine the roles, relationships and institutions?

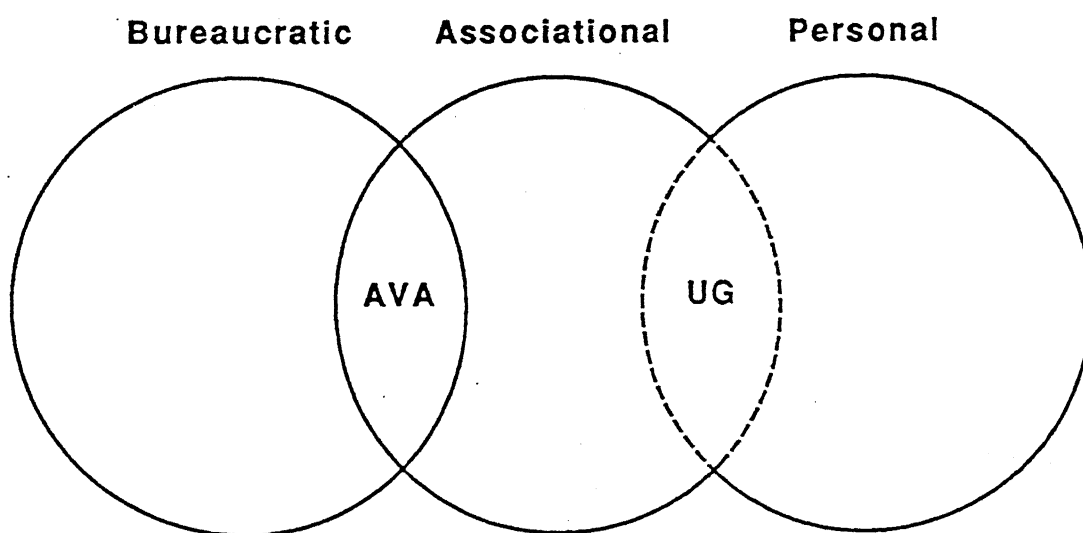
Many of these questions point out at the inadequate understanding of VDOs. In this context, Billis (1989) has explicitly questioned the adequacy of the existing knowledge base about this sector. He strongly argues for undertaking studies, which can enlighten all those related to this crucial institution of social transformation, on what exactly is going on inside this sector. In a similar context, Philip (1995) has also argued the need to develop separate management theories for voluntary organisations. He has raised questions like the challenges facing today's NGO, and whether it is necessary to develop a separate model to study NGOs?

Within the existing limitations of resources and logistics, the present study would try to explore various issues in order to develop a comprehensive understanding on what Billis calls, "*what exactly is going on within this sector.*" We believe that the understanding of what actually goes on inside the VDOs involves the issues related to the ways in which VDOs perceive and analyse the contemporary crisis and contradictions, their mode of intervention, and the dilemma of sustenance. It also involves the issues related to the impact of increasing reliance on external funding, and the intervention by VDOs on the roles, relationships, and institutions. Thus to deal with the issues raised by Dhanagare and Seth, the proposed model of Billis to construct a theory of voluntary sector can be quite useful. It paves the way for a more comprehensive understanding of VDOs by combining the structural framework with the action framework. While the former helps in situating the VDOs in the wider framework of civil society, the latter would highlight the perspectives of diverse collectivities involved in day-to-day activities of VDOs.

1.8 THE CONCEPTUAL SCHEME

In 1989, Billis proposed a theory of voluntary sector by developing a model for understanding the voluntary agencies. In this model, he approaches the world of voluntary association from the perspective of problems. People have various types of problems, and they use different modes to solve different types of problems. Billis classifies the 'worlds' where problems are resolved, into three categories: personal, associational, and bureaucratic. Each of them have their own distinct 'rules of the game.' In the personal world, social problems are resolved by relatives, friends,

neighbours, on a private basis. The associational world involves a group of people who come together in order to meet some problem, to 'do something', and draws a boundary between themselves and others. Here the membership becomes important since without it the boundary cannot be made. Bureaucracy implies a system of paid staff who are organised in hierarchical roles bound together by accountability and authority (Jaques, 1976). Voluntary agencies, according to Billis, represent an ambiguous zone of intersection between the bureaucratic world and the associational world as shown in Fig. 1.1.



AVA Ambiguous Voluntary Agencies

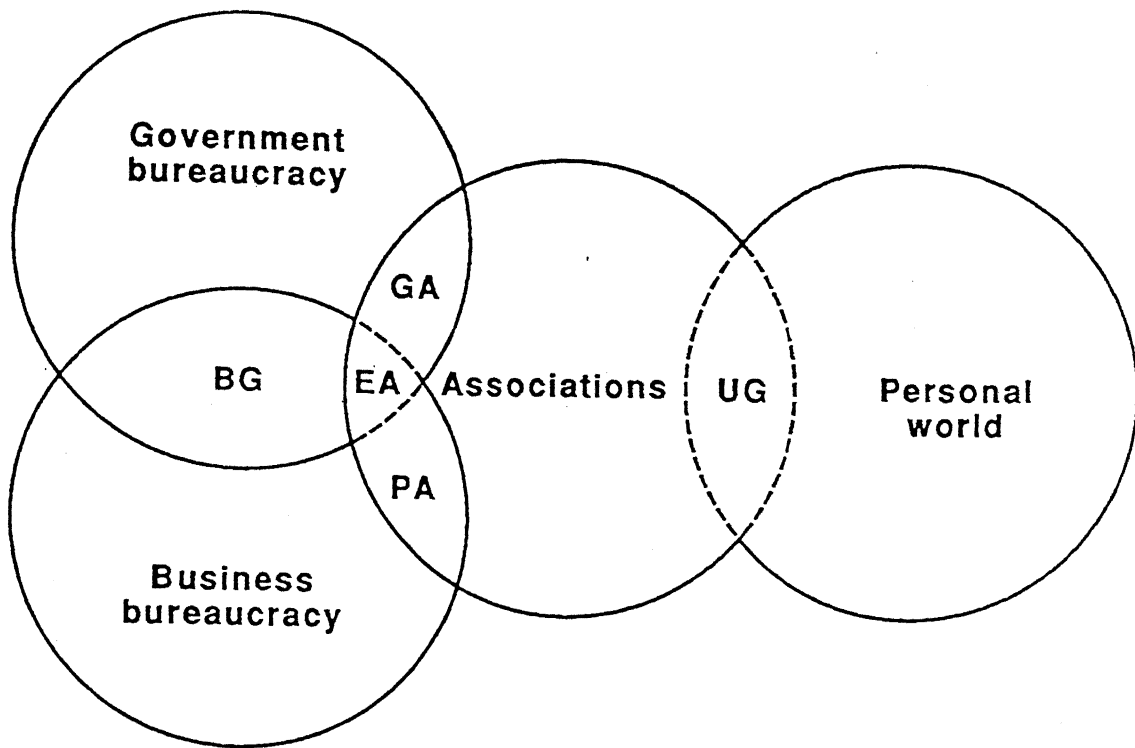
UG Unorganised Groups

Fig. 1.1 The Personal, Associational and Bureaucratic Worlds

Source: Billis, David (1989), A Theory of the Voluntary Sector

Billis refers the zone of intersection as the ambiguous voluntary agency (AVA). It is characterised by an increased differentiation of roles or statuses, and may be divided into categories such as 'member', 'committee member', 'volunteer', 'staff', and 'director'. Many of these statuses are *ambiguous* which create conflicts between the 'formal' characteristic of the bureaucracy, and the 'informal' characteristic of the associational and the personal worlds. Thus in voluntary

agencies, it is possible to find every possible combination of statuses as a basic feature. These new combinations of status are considered as the core of identity and self-consciousness of non-profit organisations (Seibel, 1987). Making a further analysis of the zone of AVA, Billis identifies three distinct sub-zones as depicted in Fig. 1.2.



- GA Government Oriented Associations
- PA Profit Oriented Associations
- EA Entrepreneurial Associations
- UG Unorganised Groups
- BG Business/Government Bureaucracies

Fig. 1.2: The World of the Voluntary Sector

Source: Billis, David (1989), A Theory of the Voluntary Sector.

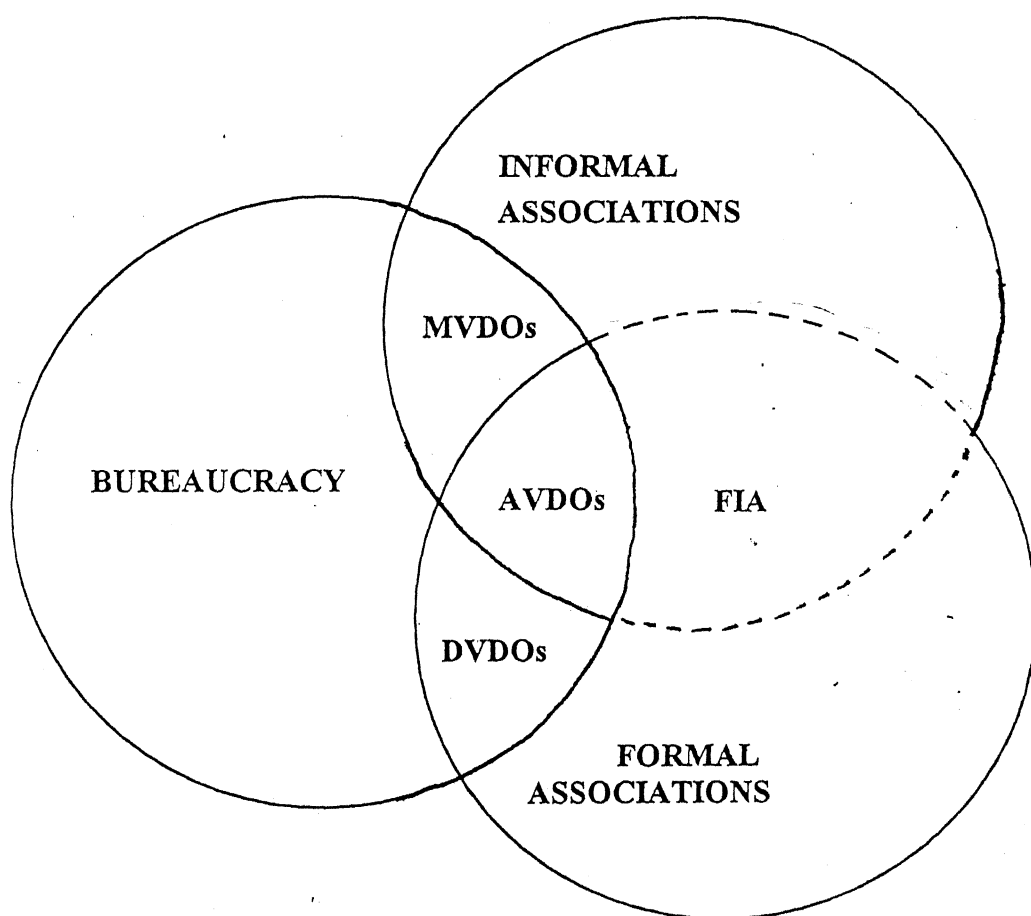
The bureaucratic world, according to him, can be further divided into the governmental bureaucracies and the business bureaucracies, which leads to three types of voluntary agencies, namely, government oriented associations (GA), profit or market oriented associations (PA), and the entrepreneurial associations (EA). For GA the government represents the prime source of revenue. The staff and management

committee regard government support as appropriate because the social problems that the voluntary agencies tackle are those that agency believed should be the responsibility of the government. In the PA, the mutual self-interest of the members/staff is expressed through the market philosophy. They are primarily dependent on the fees from the 'clients'. The EA has strong philosophical roots in the association, sometimes a strong membership base, and draws resources from the association by means of membership fees, donations, legacies, and endowments.

We would, however, like to point out some limitations in the model proposed by Billis. First, the categorisation of voluntary agencies as the market oriented agencies motivated by the philosophy of profit does not conform to the empirical realities, particularly in the Indian context. Second, keeping the associational world within AVA as a uniform single space seems to be an over simplification. It does not highlight the crucial role of the 'people', as the *participants* in the activities of voluntary agencies. Any attempt to develop an understanding of VDOs as the corporate/bureaucratic organisations in the Weberian sense, and keeping the 'people' out of its purview, cannot help in adequate theorisation of the VDOs, and their major dimensions. Therefore, we require some modifications in the model.

VDOs being a manifestation of collective social action can be analysed from the social action perspective. Social action, according to Weber (1961b) can be categorised into three categories, viz., traditional, affectual and rational. Of them the rational action can further be classified as formal-rational and value-rational actions. Voluntary actions or altruistic actions are basically value-rational actions (Scott, 1995). The system of action can be structurally differentiated at three levels: the interactional, the organisational, and the societal. Each of them is relatively an autonomous system of action having its own mechanisms and processes (Luhman, 1975a, 1975b). These levels of action manifest themselves through three different types of collective actors, viz., the groups, the organisations, and the movements. Thus VDOs can be analysed and understood as an autonomous system of action which exist at the interface between the small voluntary groups or associations existing at the interactional level, and the movements existing at the societal level (Eder, 1993). Ideally, the system of collective voluntary action should be looked upon as autonomous space of social interaction in civil society, outside the sphere of the state and the market. This space of social interaction (which Billis refers as AVA) contains both, the formal characteristics of bureaucracy, and the informalities of

associational world. However, the space of associational world within the zone of AVA is not uniform. It includes the executive body members or the general body members constitute the formal and legalised structure of the organisation. We may refer them as the *formal association*. It also includes the volunteers, the community level workers, and the people/target group, whose active *participation as members* of AVA is sought in the field activities. They may be referred as *informal association*. And, sometimes, some of the volunteers or the target group members also become a formal member of the executive or the governing body. They may belong to the space of formal-informal association. Consequently, the zone of AVA should be analysed in terms of Figure 1.3.



MVDOs: Movement type VDOs
 DVDOs: Delivery type VDOs
 AVDOs: Ambiguous VDOs
 FIA : Formal-Informal Association

Fig. 1.3: The Emerging Framework of Ambiguous VDOs

By delineating a distinct space of informal association, this model highlights the centrality of the 'people', which conforms to one of the most important tenets of the civil society concept. Figure 1.3 shows that the ambiguous zone of voluntary agency contains three conceptually distinct types of VDOs. The movement type VDOs (MVDOS) represent those VDOs, in which the local people, the volunteers, and the activists are primarily involved in all the major activities, ranging from the goal designing, planning, decision making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. They are usually unpaid or paid some honorarium. They aim at changing the social structure, and prefer a movement oriented approach in the field. The hardcore ideology based VDOs, like People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), or the VDOs based on hardcore Gandhian approach are examples of this type of VDOs. These VDOs are highly sceptical of bringing social change through external funds in general, and foreign funds in particular. According to Dhanagare, this type of VDOs may belong to the *stage of socialist orientation*. The bureaucratic component in these VDOs is basically limited to a formal organisational structure, which is essential for legitimisation. Delivery type VDOs (DVDOS) represent those VDOs which organise their activities primarily through the formal members of the organisation. They can be paid or unpaid staff. They are primarily engaged in charity and welfare activities. The Ambiguous VDOs (AVDOS) represent the contemporary VDOs, which exhibit relatively more complex characteristics. They emerged primarily during the 1980s. This period was marked by the need for ensuring people's active participation in the developmental efforts. Simultaneously, there was increasing emphasis on providing more space for *professionals* possessing some technical qualifications to enhance efficiency of VDOs. VDOs at the grassroots level have accommodated these two characteristics in varying degrees depending upon their ideological shade and the grassroots level dynamics.

Thus we can conceptualise two distinct categories among the AVDOS. The first category of AVDOS would include those VDOs, which rely primarily on pre-designed projects and professionals to achieve the organisational goals. They seek to elicit people's participation in the process of development through implementing *concrete* projects. We may call them *product oriented VDOs*, as they seem to deliver projects like a concrete product. The second category of VDOs would, however, lay more emphasis on the *process* of people's mobilisation and conscientisation. They seek to involve the volunteers and activists in greater degree to implement the

operational activities of the organisation. We may refer to them *as process oriented VDOs*. This classification broadly conforms to the categories of contemporary VDOs identified in the literature. For example, the statement adopted by a two day national convention of voluntary organisations held on March 7-8, 1994 in Delhi, identified two important roles for voluntary organisations. The first is that of catalyst in the empowerment of the poor, which calls for the mobilisation and organisation of the poor and the other vulnerable sections of the society such as women. The second is the role of supplementing the governments in the delivery of different services to the people. This amounts to voluntary organisations taking up development projects and schemes themselves by mobilising funds from internal and external sources (Maithani, 1995).

In a similar kind of classification, Garain (1994) categorises the contemporary VDO phenomenon into two categories. First category includes those organisations which aim at improving the condition of the field and the people within the existing social structure. They supplement the government efforts in reaching out the less accessible target groups, and at times complement the existing services in response to the other needs of the same target groups. The second one includes VDOs, which are more radical in approach. They take the steps to conscientise and mobilise people to raise their voice in order to protect their own interests. The 'development and charity' type organisations can be put in the first category and the VDOs engaged in conscientisation, mobilisation and organisation can be put in the second category (Dhanagare). The classifications of voluntary agencies by Roy (1989) also identifies the agencies that believe in using professionals and managerial expertise, and actually engaged in professionalising voluntarism at the village level and believe in providing technical and socio-economic services; and those engaged in conscientisation and organisational work. Besides them, he also mentions about traditional welfare type agencies primarily engaged in relief/rehabilitation/post-natural management work and those engaged in welfare type work like social welfare and social service organisations. Bakshi (1996) has identified primarily two categories of NGOs, viz., *Welfare oriented NGOs* and *Struggle oriented NGOs*. According to him, most of the NGOs have come into being in the last two decades during which the people's knowledge has gained respect and there is a trend towards participative research. He emphasises the special need to pause and ask, "how 'we' (i.e. the outsider activists) are perceived by those we have been seeking to empower?" This question also

suggests a need to include the people in construction of VDOs.

Using the above modifications in the conceptual framework developed by Billis, the present study explores the nature of interactions among the diverse statuses and roles in VDOs and the process through which they change. It would also attempt to address the issue of *ambiguity* among diverse roles, the nature of conflicts, and its implications. In this framework, the concept of VDOs includes 'people' by incorporating the target group within its conceptual ambit. People are no more seen as mere beneficiaries, clients, or target population. The notions of people's co-operation, people's involvement, people's participation, people's contribution which are commonly used these days, imply that people are the active 'participants' in all the operational activities of the organisation. In this context, Coate et al. (1996) have used the term 'participants' for all those involved in the process of sustainable development. *Thus ideally speaking, the beneficiaries or the target group must be seen as playing the role of participant in the ambit of VDOs.*

The structural spheres of these institutions thus broadly include three diverse collectivities, viz., the *executive body*, the *program implementing staff*, and the *target group* (the people). The organisational staff may further be divided into two distinct categories, viz. the *professionals* possessing some technical qualifications, and the *grassroots workers* belonging to the field area of the VDO. Thus, the problem of boundary, ambiguity, or identity in VDOs needs to be studied through the analysis of the nature of interaction among the following four collectivities:

1. the executive body;
2. the professionals;
3. the grassroots workers/activists; and
4. the target group or the people.

The new conceptual framework proposed here will also help in critically examining the prevailing understanding about the grassroots VDOs, viz., (a) they are more effective because of their participatory method to promote people's participation, raise awareness and mobilise local people and resources, (b) they are informal, humane, less bureaucratic, rapid, cost effective, and close to the grassroots, (c) they are flexible in structure and operation, and also have trained, experienced and dedicated workers for effective implementation of the developmental projects, and (d) VDOs adopt innovative and experimental approaches, encompassing institutional, structural, behavioural and attitudinal changes.

1.9 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In the context of the discussions carried out in the preceding section, the broad objectives of the study are as follows:

1. to examine the factors which led to the emergence of the voluntary development organisations;
2. to examine the nature of interventions initiated by the voluntary development organisations in the field;
3. to analyse the mode of intervention used in the field;
4. to examine the process of emergence of a structure in a voluntary development organisation;
5. to analyse the process of capacity building and its impact on diverse roles in a voluntary development organisation;
6. to examine the impact of mode of interventions and the development of structure on the process of interactions between the leadership, professionals and the community level workers ; and
7. to examine the dynamics of interactions between the target groups (i.e., the people) and the other collectivities in the voluntary development organisations.

1.10 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To make sense from the case studies, Edwards & Hulme (1992) suggested the need for developing a conceptual framework. Usually this type of studies revolve around certain research questions raised by the author(s) at the beginning of their work. The major research questions raised in this study are as follows:

1. How and in what context did the voluntary development organisations emerge?
2. What was the nature of association of the persons involved in the formation of the voluntary development organisation?
3. How did the leadership analyse the contemporary crises and contradictions at the grassroots level?
4. What does the present leadership aim to achieve through the voluntary development organisation?
5. What are the various programmes and projects initiated by the voluntary

development organisation?

6. What strategies were adopted to implement the selected projects and programmes in the field and how did they change over time? Is there any conflict between the stated objectives of the voluntary development organisation and the strategies adopted?
7. What is the nature of the present organisational structure and how has it emerged? Is there any role ambiguity or conflict associated with this structure?
8. What is the nature of interactions between the leadership, professionals and the community level workers?
9. What perceptions and reactions does this interaction develop among diverse roles?
10. How the organisational capacity has built up over the years? How does this affect the perceptions of diverse collectivities about the organisation?
11. How do the target groups (i.e., the people) perceive this phenomenon of intervention?
12. How does their perception affect their nature of involvement and participation in the organisational activities?
13. How does the intervention by the organisation change, modify, and redefine the roles, relationships and institutions at the grassroots level?

1.11 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter One states the research problem and its rationale. Based on the available literature on the subject, it has presented the theoretical debates on VDOs. This provides the basis for the development of the conceptual framework for the study, and presents the objectives and research questions.

Chapter Two reviews the methodologies used in studies on VDOs and presents a broad research design. It describes the procedure of data generation, and the tools used for it. The data gathered are both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The tools used for the purpose are semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, open-ended questionnaires, field notes, participant observations, and informal discussions with the individuals. Apart from these, secondary sources like project reports, annual reports, video cassettes, evaluation reports, proceedings of the

meetings are also used to generate data and develop insights into the working of VDOs. Finally, there is a brief note on the data analysis procedure.

Chapter Three and Chapter Four present a detailed discussion on the two cases of this study, viz., PANI and DISHA. The chapters have been organised according to the research questions raised in the first chapter. Broadly, they discuss about the emergence of the cases, the nature and mode of intervention, their internal dynamics, and the interaction with the people. The chapters conclude with major findings and inferences.

Chapter Five summarises the design and findings of this study. A comparative analysis has been made on the basis of major empirical and theoretical findings, and their implications. This includes a model of the phasic-growth of VDOs and the associated characteristics in each phase. It concludes by suggesting the area of future research and highlighting major limitations of the study.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter highlights the methodological complexity involved in studying voluntary development organisations (VDOs). Nonetheless, we have reviewed the methodologies employed in studying collective actors in general and VDOs in particular. On the basis of existing literature and our requirements, a broad research design has been outlined to conduct this study. The chapter also provides justification for using multi-methods to comprehend the complexities of grassroots VDOs. It elucidates the reasons for selecting two particular VDOs, namely, People's Action for National Integration (PANI) and Disha Social Organisation (DISHA). It also describes the tools and techniques used for data generation and analysis.

2.1 STUDIES OF VDOs: A METHODOLOGICAL REPORT

A review of literature shows that majority of studies on VDOs are speculative in nature. They have primarily explored and analysed the relationships with the agencies of state, market and civil society. A systematic discussion on methodological aspects while conducting empirical studies is lacking in most of the cases.

A few studies on VDOs have employed survey based quantitative methods. They aim at causal explanation of variations in the dependent variables. Narayana (1992) for example, used the survey method to explain the extent of bureaucratisation with the organisational and personal background characteristics as the independent variables. The respondents were drawn using stratified random sample and a structured interview schedule was administered to collect data. For analysis, statistical techniques like multiple linear regression analysis, t-test, and ANOVA were used.

To develop further understanding on methods employed in studying similar kinds of collective voluntary action, we explored the studies conducted on voluntary associations. McPherson et al. (1992) developed and tested a theory of dynamic behaviour of voluntary groups. They analysed the event history data set constructed from interviews using the life history calendar method. The information on ego-

centred social networks was developed from the general social survey network module. Popielarz and McPherson (1995) also analysed the event history data set, generated by the life history calendar approach of 2,813 voluntary association membership spells. In their study, hyper-network sampling method was used to generate a random sample of voluntary associations from a random sample of individuals. Fogarty (1990) conducted a pilot study of 15 voluntary associations of different sizes to develop an understanding of 'efficiency' and 'democracy' in voluntary associations. In this study, the author explored the answers to certain research questions and examined the concept of efficiency and democracy in the voluntary sector in general and voluntary associations in particular. Curtis et al. (1992), in another attempt to study voluntary associations, examined a cross national sample with the help of six control variables, viz., education, employment status, community size, gender, marital status, and age. The World Values Survey conducted during 1981 to 1983 was used as the data source. Logistic regression analysis was used to find out the effects of control variables on the association membership.

For the apologists of qualitative methods, however, the sample survey method restricts the scope of data and information to be generated. It does not provide an in-depth and holistic understanding of the social phenomena. They argue that an intensive qualitative methodology is more appropriate to develop a comprehensive understanding about the internal dynamics, structural location, and transformative potential of the VDOs (Pandey, 1991). In the recent past, sociologists of work and organisation have preferred qualitative methodology and used cases as the primary instrument for the study of a plant or an organisation (Heidenreich, 1991; Yin, 1994).

Empirical studies on VDOs have generally preferred case study method. Chander (1996) used this method to understand the modus-operandi of three locally active NGOs in Central Himalayan Region of Uttar Pradesh hills. The focus in this study was on people's participation. He concentrated on farmers, women and artisan groups to generate data, as they primarily constitute the target group. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) method was applied to generate data. Chander raised the research question on how, how much, and how far the NGOs are able to ensure participation of the people. Association of Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development (AVARD, New Delhi) conducted case studies of two NGOs from India to analyse the government-NGO co-operation.

Murthy (1996) refers to some case studies in which field study and

consultative workshops were used as tools of data generation. Authors of these studies addressed research questions on various issues relating to Non Government Development Organisations (NGDOs) and *Panchayati Raj Institutions* (PRIs). In a pioneering study on the role of NGOs and the state in sustainable agriculture development, Farrington & Leiwis (1993) used case study method to generate data. They adopted a more flexible methodology, than would have been permitted with a predetermined sampling scheme. Similarly (Schmale, 1993) has presented three case studies (from Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia) of NGOs to analyse why many local organisations continue to carry out development work in top-down, non-participatory and non-sustainable manner.

Some of these case studies, however, have also employed statistical tools. Torres et al. (1991) made an attempt to understand the effects of increased bureaucratisation and commitment on resource mobilisation in voluntary organisations through a case study of privately-operated, non-profit emergency food pantry in South Texas. Interview technique was used to generate data. The sample consisted of all organisational members of the case organisation. Statistical techniques such as coefficient theta and coefficient alpha were applied for analysis. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the level of commitment. Similarly, a number of important studies on environmental NGOs have used case study method, either singly or in combination with other sociological methods. For example, Rich (1994) used case study of environmental NGOs to understand the 'bottom line' of the problem. In another study on environmental NGOs, Princen and Finger (1994) used case study and comparative analysis to explore the implications, the extensions, and the general lessons of the case. Similarly, Guha (1991) used the archival sources, manuscripts, periodicals, government documents, books, articles and theses to study the sociology of *Chipko*, a case of environmental movements. In this study, he presented a narrative of peasants' resistance, congruent with the political-cultural paradigm.

From the methodological point of view, two major categories of studies can be identified in the literature on voluntary organisations. The first category uses a qualitative examination of one or two movement type organisations. This provides an in-depth knowledge of the discourse and practices of a subset of active organisations. The second category of studies examines the structure of organisational behaviour. They employ two forms of analysis: (a) an essentialistic or structural linguistic form, and (b) non-essentialist form. The essentialistic form has been criticised as being

arbitrary, and reductive because it replaces the complex of meaning that is constantly shaped and changed in communicative action with an abstract construction of the social scientist (Brulle & Mason, 1996). The second form is more attuned to grasp the complexity of meanings given to a social phenomenon by the actor.

Nonetheless, understanding the organisational processes and evaluating the organisational performance of voluntary agencies involve complex methodological issues. The lack of any proven body of theory on voluntary agencies further complicates the problem (Brett, 1993). These studies also expose the problems in methods of data generation and the issues in data interpretation. In the present study, we have basically used a non-essentialist analysis to capture the insiders' perspective. We have preferred case study method to understand complexities of issues involved in organising voluntary action. To comprehend a holistic understanding of the cases, we have also employed within-case purposive sampling. Further, to increase the reliability of data and substantiating their validity, we have used multi-method technique for data generation and analysis.

2.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

During 1980s and 1990s, social scientists have shown an increasing interest in qualitative research methodology including the case study method (Ragin and Becker, 1992; Yin, 1994). The need for developing an appropriate research design for such studies has also been emphasised simultaneously to follow a coherent research strategy (Mason, 1996; Patton, 1980). Depending upon the context and the type of research questions, they require creativity and critical thinking. In the present study, we have laid down the research design in the wider conception of qualitative research which goes beyond the issues of subjective 'meaning' towards issues of language, representation and social organisation (Silverman, 1997). We feel that to develop a comprehensive understanding of voluntary development organisational phenomena as conceptualised in the previous chapter, case study is, probably, the most appropriate method. We have preferred examining a few case studies, rather than surveying a smattering of many cases. The objective of the approach is to begin to build the base for understanding the ambiguities of VDOs within a carefully developed research design. We view this study a necessary beginning step, both theoretically and empirically.

Case study may be of one particular case as well as of two or more cases of similar or contrasting nature for comparative analysis. It is particularly suited when the researcher wants to understand the inner working of a specific social group (McGee, 1980; Marshall, 1996). In the present work we have studied two distinct types of grassroots VDOs which have emerged from the conceptual framework as discussed in the previous chapter.

In the past, our association with the voluntary sector provided us opportunity to closely observe the working of grassroots VDOs in India. We had learnt about serious limitations of survey method and extensive application of tools like structured interview schedule and questionnaires for studying grassroots action. Further, our primary concern to understand the day-to-day activities of VDOs, problems of the *people* at the grassroots level, and nature of interaction among diverse collectivities, demanded a strategic research design. Experience had shown that during interaction with outsiders, the respondents start sharing many of their personal experiences or problems. These might not relate to the contents of structured interview schedule or pre-designed questionnaire. The research design should provide time and space for accommodating such digressions and allowing interaction with the people on their home ground, which may lead to relevant information on dimensions not yet revealed by the existing theories or experiences (Kirk and Miller, 1988). Moreover, grassroots level VDOs work among diverse communities, in different contexts, with various programmes and projects. To develop a comprehensive understanding about their mode of intervention and the nature of interaction with the *target group* in the field, the researcher needs to make close observations. The observations can be made more keen and natural by establishing a good rapport with the field and the people. This requires sufficient time to be spent in the field with the respondents.

Nonetheless, to capture a holistic understanding of the cases from the perspectives of diverse collectivities in VDOs, we felt it essential to opt for a within-case sampling. It was a purposive sampling of the field area and the field workers. Thus within a case, combination of interviews, observations, focus group discussion, participation in village level meetings, unobtrusive methods and questionnaires were used and some quantitative data were also collected. In the past many researchers have advocated the use of triangulation, i.e., the combination of methods in studies of human behaviour including the organisational behaviour and accepted the incorporation of quantitative data into qualitative research (Denzin, 1978; Jick, 1983;

Webb and Weick, 1983; Silverman, 1985; Agar, 1986; Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Thus the data are generated using multiple tools. They include the lived experiences of the diverse collectivities of the VDOs. The conceptual framework of the study as developed in the previous chapter demands adequate space to accommodate the insiders' perspective on various research questions. This makes it imperative to explore the response of diverse collectivities of VDOs in a natural setting. These diverse collectivities interact variously with each other in different contexts. Gathering first-hand information on the nature of these interactions demands establishing a good rapport with them. The researcher needs to go beyond the role of an external, objective data-generating agent. He must give due importance to the phenomenology of the action.

While outlining the research design to be used in this study, we have also taken clue from Mason (1996). He emphasises that a qualitative research design should clearly present the essence of the inquiry and express it in the form of an intellectual puzzle with clearly formulated set of research questions. It should address the following five questions about the essence of the inquiry:

1. What is the nature of the phenomena, or entities, or social 'reality', which the researcher wishes to investigate?
2. What might represent knowledge or evidence of the entities or social 'reality'?
3. What topic, or broad substantive area, is the research concerned with?
4. What are the research questions?
5. What is the purpose of the research?

In the following paragraphs, we have broadly discussed our ideas in the backdrop of the above questions.

The present study assumes that the social world is, in some way, organised around four spaces of the family, the civil society, the state, and the market. These relatively autonomous spaces interact with each other. Society needs a space where an individual or a group of individuals may voluntarily come out of the space of family to fulfil some of their needs and expectations, which are not possible to fulfil within the family, state and market. For example, with the dissolution of the self-subsistence family system, a sphere of free economic relation and individual life seeking emerged. Hegel termed it as 'civil society'. The space of civil society includes a variety of institutions and organisations, which are meaningful components of the social world. With the emergence of the VDOs as one of the most important component of civil

society, the methodological issues in studying and generating scientific knowledge about this phenomenon pose a challenge before social scientists.

The present study explores the research questions raised in the first chapter. The basic intellectual puzzle, from which these research questions have arisen, helps in developing an understanding of the internal dynamics of the voluntary sector. The puzzle is - *What exactly is going on within the VDO and what is the nature of interaction among diverse collectivities associated with the VDOs?* Since the diverse social collectivities, their interactions, their interpretations, and understanding constitute the social reality, we have attempted to answer this puzzle in terms of these components. It was decided that knowledge about them should be generated empirically by going to the grassroots level. Social interactions and their interpretations would be counted as the evidence or knowledge of the social phenomenon. The study attempts to answer this puzzle from the insiders' perspective. These insiders have been broadly classified into four collectivities, viz. the executive body, the professional workers, the grassroots workers, and the target group. Initially we also wanted to include in the ambit of this study the local state agencies and the donors but due to paucity of time and failure of establishing contacts with them, they had to be left out from the purview of the study. This should not affect theoretical generalisation or conclusions of the study since our basic purpose is to understand perspectives of the insiders who are actively involved in day-to-day affairs of the VDO. However, if one is interested in the examination of working of the VDO in a given structural context, it is desirable to include the local state and market agencies as well as the donors. The collectivities which are directly involved in pursuing the goals of social change and development, should act as subjects and not the objects of knowledge generating process (Borda & Rahman, 1991). In this context we have, therefore, preferred a dynamic and enduring methodological framework instead of going for a static and fixed research design.

The theoretical implications of this study should be seen in the backdrop of its capacity to provide answers to concrete problems. The usefulness of theory as a tool at the service of organised social groups, has been seen as validating a theory of society or a theory of social change (de Oliveira & de Oliveira, 1982). Smelser (1996) emphasised that social scientists must make a radical departure from the traditional utilitarianism, positivism, and pragmatism. According to him, there is a need to change the way of understanding the relation of social knowledge to social problems

and their solutions towards more realistic account. Wallerstein (1996) also highlighted the need to return back from formal rationality to substantive rationality, which addresses the issues of welfare and freedom from subordination. The conventional range of operationally usable products generated by social scientists should be enriched particularly with forward-looking action methodologies. The action-relevance of the social sciences will help respond better to the fundamental calling of sociology: not only to analyse and explain, but also to assist in transforming the fabric of society (Cernea, 1985).

2.3 THE CASES

The two cases selected for this study (namely, PANI and DISHA) are active at the grassroots level in the Uttar Pradesh State of India. Both PANI and DISHA emerged during 1980s. During this period, voluntary sector had just started receiving massive financial support both from inside and outside the country. Within the country, limitations of the state to reach out the far-flung remote areas and deliver developmental inputs to all had started creating an institutional space for VDOs. The Seventh Five Year Plan of the government of India called upon the NGOs to take up anti-poverty and minimum needs programmes (Bhattacharya, 1987). The external donor agencies also decided to modify their policies and started providing direct financial assistance to these grassroots organisations. Concurrently, the voluntary sector started emphasising the people's empowerment and sustainable development to be its primary role. This highlighted the importance of people's role in the activities implemented by voluntary agencies. However, the mode of intervention in order to ensure people's participation remained elusive. The VDOs, which emerged during this phase have broadly followed two distinct modes of intervention. Some of them prefer a development *delivery* approach while others give more importance to the people's conscientisation and mobilisation. Both of them, however, have stressed the importance of the professionals' role in implementing the organisational activities. PANI represents the VDOs who primarily adopt a *development delivery approach*, while DISHA represents the genres of VDOs, which give more importance to people's *conscientisation and mobilisation*.

They are active in rural areas. Basically these VDOs work with rural women belonging to the backward sections of the community. Conversation with them is

possible in their own dialect only. Even the grassroots workers of the VDOs can talk only in their mother tongue. To minimise the distortions in data due to language problem, we decided to conduct this study in the Hindi speaking State of Uttar Pradesh. It is the most populous State of the country. It is also a relatively less developed states of India. It was felt that a comprehensive and in-depth study on VDOs as the crucial agents of social change active at the grassroots level in the State is relevant for understanding grassroots actions in developing countries. It should provide useful insights not only to the academicians but also to the policy makers, donors, the VDOs, the networks of VDOs, and the individual activists.

2.4 METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF DATA GENERATION

As discussed above, this study has used both, primary and secondary sources of data. The sources of primary data are the executive body, the organisational staff, and the target groups. Besides them, various programmes, workshops and meetings organised during my stay in the field, also constituted important sources of primary data. Personal discussions with key government officials with whom the organisation maintains frequent contacts also provided useful data. The local key persons like village *panchayat*¹ officials, school teachers, auxiliary nurse and midwives (ANMs) and local community leaders were contacted to develop a holistic understanding of the VDOs. The interview schedule and the major items used to generate data from different collectivities are listed in Appendices I to VII.

A number of the secondary data sources such as the VDO's annual reports, the evaluation reports of some specific programmes from external experts, proceedings of the organisational staff meetings, the village meetings, the workshops, the training programmes, etc., were used. Besides them, data from the available audio and video recordings of the functions organised by the organisations were also analysed.

It may be noted that the search for more accurate and consistent explanations of social and political realities has emphasised the involvement of those persons who have been the objects of collective research for years. In this regard, Hall et al. (1982) have enlisted the following four fundamental steps to be followed in any sociological research: approaching the group and establishing relationship with it; the period of observation and collection of information; the organisation of collected information;

¹ Village *panchayats* are the administrative units under the development blocks.

and finally returning the material to the group for discussion and elaboration. In this backdrop, we designed a broad procedural framework for data generation and analysis. Before starting the fieldwork, we acquired the brochure and the latest annual reports of the VDOs by post. It provided basic information about the organisational structure and functions, their field area, and the type of activities they were engaged in. After the procurement of the preliminary information, we decided to carry out the data generation and preliminary analysis work in the following three phases:

Phase I

In this phase, we accomplished the following tasks:

- Acquisition of all possible secondary data through various sources.
- Detailed interview with the secretary and other available executive body members.
- Administering the questionnaires to the executive body members and some of the organisational staffs.
- Observing the procedure of implementing various programmes and conducting meetings.
- Conducting informal discussions with the organisational staff, and holding a few meetings with the target groups at the village level.

Phase II

After analysing the data generated during Phase I, we decided to generate more data through:

- Clarifications and verifications of the secondary data, individually from the secretary and other key persons involved in the activities of the VDO since its inception. This included cross verification and triangulation of data obtained from the target groups, the organisational staff, and other related persons like the government officials, local village *pradhans*, school teachers, local community leaders, etc.
- Administering the modified questionnaires to selected organisational staff.
- Verification of data thus generated, from the secretary, the staff members, the target groups, and the key persons.
- Detailed interviews with the project in-charge and with the selected grassroots

workers.

- Focus group discussion with the target groups and with the grassroots workers.
- Observation of day-to-day functioning of the organisation.

Phase III

During the final phase, some more data were generated using the following tools:

- Village meetings and focus group discussion in the villages.
- Interviews with the key persons like village *pradhans*, the school teachers, the local community leaders, the local government officials, etc.
- A brief presentation of the preliminary analysis before the secretary, the staff members, and the target groups separately and noting down their reactions and responses.

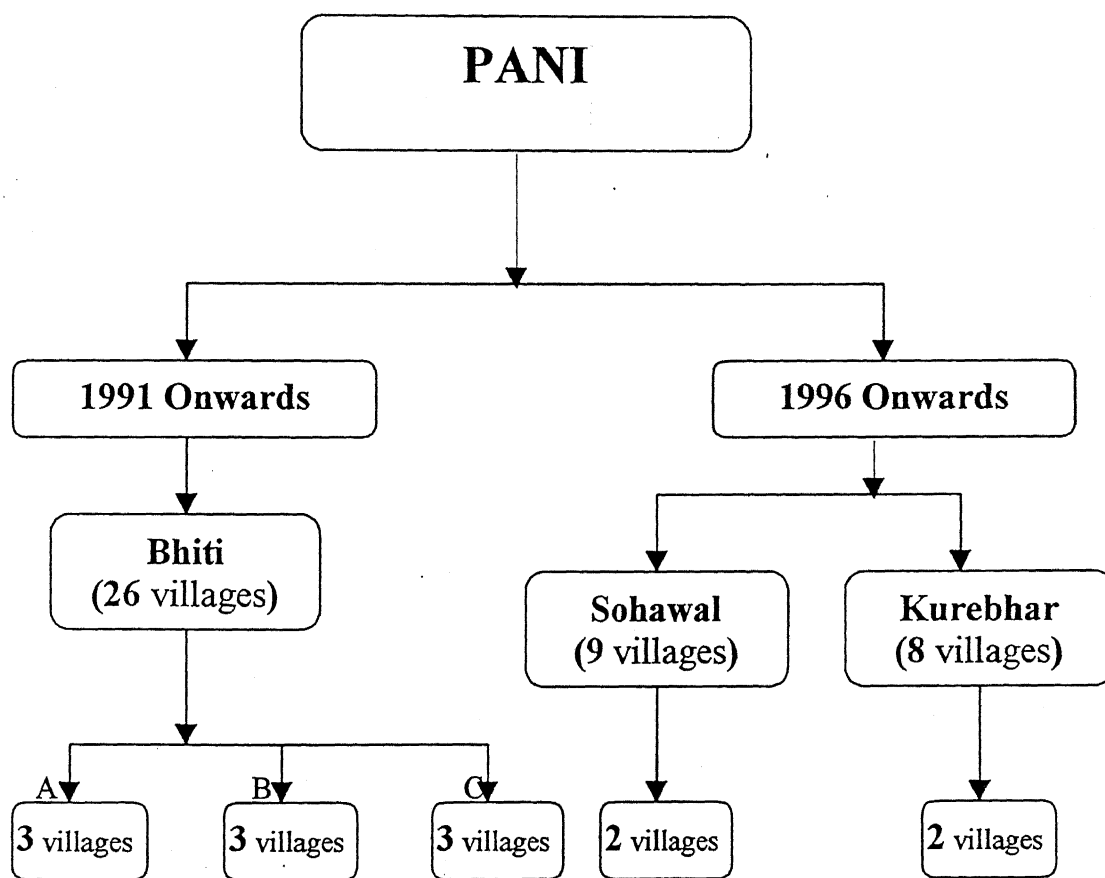
The actual data generation process was slightly different in the two cases. It occurred due to differences in the field level logistics, the nature of activities, and the mode of intervention. The procedural details adopted respectively in the two organisations are presented in the following section.

2.4.1 PANI

The field area of PANI was divided into two broad categories based upon the number of years of interventions. The first category includes those 26 villages where PANI concentrated its activities from 1991 to 1996. In 1996, it diversified its activities to two other development blocks in clusters of eight to nine villages. These clusters constituted the second category of villages. During the study period, PANI started another project covering around 120 villages from one entire development block. However, I could not conduct any meeting with the target groups in these villages because the project had just started and the preliminary process of selection of grassroots workers was going on.

The villages in the first category were further classified on the basis of the criteria used by the organisation while selecting the working villages. The leadership had selected the villages on the basis of their distance from the head office of the organisation. The leadership identified three categories of villages. They are as follows: the villages situated near the head office of PANI (i.e., within 4 Kms from the head office), villages situated at a moderate distance from the head office (i.e.,

between 4 to 10 Kms), and the villages situated far away from the head office (i.e., more than 10 Kms from the head office). In all nine villages were selected, three villages from each of the above three categories. These villages were selected on the basis of the monthly plans chalked out by the grassroots workers. During the stay in the field, I accompanied the grassroots workers during their visits to three villages as per their plan. In the selected villages I held village meetings and conducted focus group discussions. Similarly from the second category of villages, I selected two villages and conducted focus group discussion. The different categories of sample villages are shown in Figure 2.1.



- A indicates villages situated at a distance less than 4 kms from the head office of PANI.
B indicates villages situated between 4 to 10 kms from the head office of PANI.
C indicates villages situated at a distance more than 10 kms from the head office of PANI

Fig. 2.1: Sample of Villages Selected from the Field Area of PANI

Among the functionaries, I conducted detailed personal interviews with the secretary, the office secretary, the founder chairman and the vice-chairman. The other executive body members were administered the questionnaire by post. However, no response was received from them even after sending the reminders. All the four project co-ordinators were interviewed and administered questionnaires. Among the grassroots workers in PANI, there are two levels of hierarchy, viz. the supervisory level workers and the community level workers. From the first level, all the workers were administered questionnaires. However, the detailed interview was held with one worker each from the major projects who were selected on the basis of the duration of their association with the project. The second level grassroots workers were selected from the Bhati development block only, where the organisation was working since its inception. They can be further divided into two categories. The first category included those workers who were associated with the VDO for the past six to seven years. The second category included the workers who joined the VDO during the past three years, the time when PANI started getting number of projects. From each category at the bottom-most level of the grassroots workers, we selected a sample of 10 workers. Thus a total of 20 (out of 48) workers from this category were administered the questionnaire. Table 2.1 presents the sample size of the functionaries at the different levels of hierarchy.

Table 2.1: Sample Size of the Functionaries

Functionaries	Total no. of Functionaries	No. of Functionaries Interviewed	No. of Functionaries Administered Questionnaires
Executive Body Members	10	3	3
Project Co-ordinators	5	5	5
Supervisors	14	7	14
Community Workers	48	20	20

In addition to this, personal interviews were conducted with some of the former village level volunteers who were actively associated with the activities of PANI. Other key persons like the village *pradhans*, the school teachers, the local community leaders, the local government officials were contacted and interviewed

whenever it appeared necessary to clarify some matter. The overall process of data generation, triangulation and preliminary analysis was completed in three visits to the organisation. The first visit to the organisation was for a period of around 10 days. The second and third visits consumed one month each. In total, it took around two and half months to complete the field work in PANI.

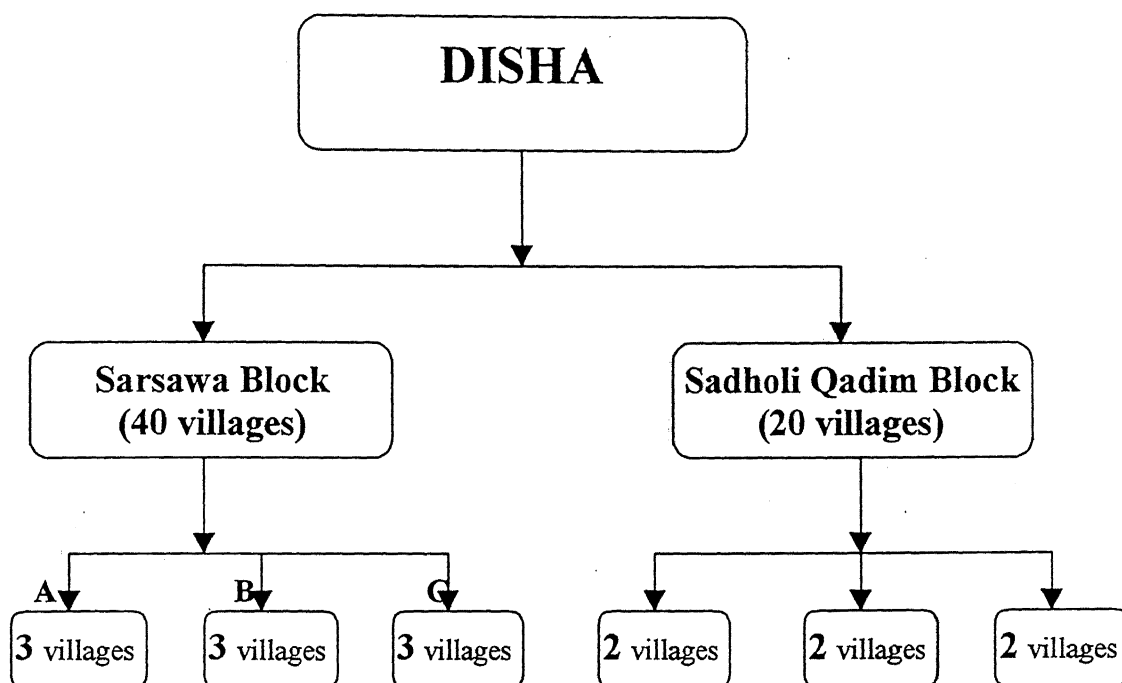
2.4.2 DISHA

In case of DISHA, the process of data generation and preliminary analysis was completed in two months during two visits. It was done primarily due to two reasons. First, DISHA was situated quite far away from our Institute. This restricted the frequent visits to the organisation keeping in view the time and other resource constraints. Second, my prior experience in PANI made the data-generation process more smooth and efficient.

DISHA has primarily concentrated its activities in two pockets of villages, from two different development blocks of Saharanpur district. Although its work spread incidentally from one village to another in response to people's demand, I followed the same criteria for selecting the villages, which was employed in case of PANI. This was done purposively to maintain a methodological uniformity in the study. Accordingly three villages were selected from each of the following three categories: (a) the villages situated near the head office, (b) the villages situated at a moderate distance from the head office, and (c) the villages far away from the head office. Thus a total of nine villages were selected from the first pocket of around 40 villages. From the other development block, where the work is concentrated in around 20 villages, we selected a total number of six villages (two each from the three categories). Thus in all fifteen villages were covered during field study. The different categories of the sample villages have been shown in Figure 2.2.

In the case of DISHA, apart from the secretary, only two other executive members could be contacted and interviewed personally. The other members who were mailed the questionnaire did not respond. All the project level staffs were administered questionnaires and interviewed personally. DISHA does not have village level workers in each of its project village. The project is implemented collectively by a group of workers. There was only one project in which village level workers were employed. I interviewed some of them during the field visits. Also a focus group

discussion was held within the premise of DISHA, during one of their fortnightly meetings. In addition, I conducted interviews with some of the former village level workers who were actively involved in its activities. Other key persons like the village *pradhans*, the school teachers, the local community leaders, the local government



- A indicates villages situated at a distance less than 4 kms from the head office of DISHA.
 B indicates villages situated between 4 to 10 kms from the head office of DISHA.
 C indicates villages situated at a distance more than 10 kms from the head office of DISHA

Fig. 2.2: Sample of Villages from the Field Area of DISHA

officials were interviewed as and when some clarifications were required from them.

2.5 LINKING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS

A qualitative research design should link the research questions, methodologies and methods (Mason, 1996). Table 2.2 presents a description of the justification of using particular method(s) and data source(s) to address specific research questions.

Table 2.2: Research Questions, Data Sources, Methods and Justification

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How and in what context, did the voluntary development organisations emerge? 2. What was the nature of association of the persons involved in the formation of the voluntary development organisation? 3. How did the leadership analyse the contemporary crises and contradictions at the grassroots level? 4. What does the present leadership aim to achieve through the voluntary development organisation? 	
Data Sources and Methods	Justification
Founder members and Executive body members: Questionnaire + Interview.	Questionnaire with open-ended items on selected issues was sent by post to those members, who resided outside the working area of the organisation. Wherever possible some of these members were contacted personally for interview. It would help in understanding the nature of their involvement in the process of the emergence of the organisation.
Chief functionary(ies): Interview.	Semi-structured interview would provide detailed account of how the inception of the organisation was conceptualised, what were the contemporary grassroots level socio-economic and political conditions and how they visualised the role of the VDO.
Memorandum of Association: Documentary Analysis.	The analysis would suggest the major goals and objectives of the organisation.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. What are the various programmes and projects initiated by the voluntary development organisation? 6. What is the nature of the present structure and how has it emerged? 	
Data Sources and Methods	Justification
Chief functionaries + key persons from the community: Interview.	Interview would help in understanding the rationale for initiating different projects in different area. It would also help in getting an account of the process of the development of the organisational structure and its implications. The key persons from the community who have been closely observing the organisation since its inception would cross-check the information given by the organisational persons and would also reflect community's perspective.
Annual reports: Documentary Analysis.	It would give the year-wise account of the projects and programmes and would also reflect the process of emergence of the present organisational structure.

7. What strategies were adopted to implement the selected projects and programmes in the field and how did they change over time?	
Data Sources and Methods	Justification
Chief functionaries + project in-charge + grassroots Workers: Interview.	Interview with the chief functionaries would give a historical account of the mode of intervention of the organisation in the field. Other staffs would provide their respective account of the issue.
8. What is the nature of interaction among the leadership, professionals and the community level workers?	
9. What perceptions and reactions does this interaction develop among the diverse roles?	
Data Sources and Methods	Justification
Chief functionaries + project in-charge + grassroots workers: Interview + Observation.	Interview would reveal information on the changing nature of the relationship among different levels of organisational hierarchies since its inception. Information from different perspectives would be supplemented with the close observation by the researcher and finally would be triangulated for analyses.
The target group + key persons in community : Interview	The observatory remarks by them would substantiate the previous information.
Proceedings of various meetings: Documentary Analysis.	It would reveal the issues discussed in their regular meetings and the comments given by different workers.
10. How the organisational capacity has built up over the years? How does this affect the perception of diverse collectivities about the organisation?	
Data Sources and Methods	Justification
Chief functionaries + key persons: Interview.	It would provide information about different aspects of the organisation, which has helped in improving the overall efforts of the organisation.
Annual reports + other documents: Documentary Analysis.	It would give information about the resources and infrastructure that the organisation has built up over the years

11. How do the target groups (i.e., people) perceive this phenomenon of intervention? 12. How does their perception affect the nature of involvement and participation in the organisational activities?	
Data Sources and Methods	Justification
The target group + key persons in community: Interview + Focus Group Discussion.	This would reveal the community's perception about the organisation and its work.
Annual reports + other documents about its specific programme(s).	It would give an account of the type of projects and/or programmes through which the organisation has intervened into the community and their implications.
Observation	It would provide a first hand account of the way, the workers go to the field and interact with the people.
13. How does the intervention by the organisation change, modify, and redefine the roles, relationships and institutions at the grassroots level?	
Data Sources and Methods	Justification
Chief functionaries + project incharge + grassroots workers + target group + key persons: Interview + Focus Group Discussion.	It would provide the information about how different collectivities involved with the process of social intervention visualise and perceive the impact, implications and outcome of the organisational efforts.

2.6 TECHNIQUES OF DATA ANALYSIS

According to Yin (1994), analysis of the case is one of the least developed and most difficult aspects of case studies. He suggests to begin with a general analytic strategy, based on the priorities for what to analyse and why. The case study approach to qualitative analysis is broadly directed at the programmatic and evaluation questions: What was the nature of interaction among the participants? What were participants' attitudes towards the programmes? What role did staff play in the programme? What were the major activities in the programme? What were the primary programme processes (Patton, 1980:303)? These questions can be attempted from two perspectives: (a) objective-scientific perspective and (b) phenomenological perspective. As mentioned earlier, we have primarily used the phenomenological

perspective to explore and analyse the meanings and feelings of the participants associated with the process of social change and development.

In this study, we have analysed the data in three stages. In the first stage, the preliminary analysis was done by collating the data, generated during the first two phases of data-generation process. Written documents like the reports, minutes of the staff meetings, training reports were analysed to develop an understanding of the processes of change in the approach of intervention, nature of the programmes and projects, and their impact on the diverse roles. During the second stage, the findings were presented to the concerned collectivities and a discussion was initiated. We involved the subjects themselves in the data analysis process. It was done both individually as well as in groups. Thus for example, during the third phase of the field visit, we discussed the findings with the secretary and sought clarifications on the perceptions, interactions and conflicts among the diverse roles. These issues were also discussed and analysed in the field with the people and the organisational staff. The cross-checking through triangulation was prompted to check the authenticity and reliability of the information. During this stage, we also presented our preliminary analysis before them and received their comments. Finally, during the third stage, we collated all the information and drew the final inferences.

The research process during this study was constructed many times out of the situational and contextual demands and decisions. While exercising this flexibility, we have taken clue from the argument that a qualitative research should be conducted as a reflexive practice (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). Following Subrahmanyam (1998), it may be said that the analysis and findings are not pre-determined or pre-hypothesised. They are the outcomes of the concepts and processes emerged during different phases of data generation.

Chapter 3

PEOPLE'S ACTION FOR NATIONAL INTEGRATION: A CASE OF PRODUCT ORIENTED VDO

This chapter presents a comprehensive discussion on People's Action for National Integration (PANI), in the backdrop of the set objectives of the study. It begins with a brief description of the area of operation, and the people with whom the organisation has been constantly interacting since its inception. The chapter aims at examining the process of emergence of the organisation and developing a comprehensive profile of the project and non-project based activities implemented by it. It is followed by an analysis of its mode of intervention in the field. The chapter also examines the nature of interaction among the diverse collectivities during the process of structural development and capacity building of the organisation. Finally the impacts and implications of interactions on the diverse collectivities are discussed.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

PANI was established in 1989 as a *Society* under the Societies Registration Act XXI 1860 of India. From 1989 to 1996, it remained active in the Bhati development block of the Ambedkar Nagar district. Since 1996, it has spread its activities to three development blocks of the adjoining districts. Currently it is active in four development blocks of three districts in the Uttar Pradesh State of India. The head-office of the organisation is located in the ancestral village of its secretary (called Chachikpur) which is situated in Bhati development block. Activities in the neighbouring development blocks are co-ordinated by separate field offices. Each field office has a project co-ordinator and a team of grassroots workers.

3.2 THE AREA AND THE PEOPLE

As mentioned in Chapter 2, we have primarily concentrated upon the activities implemented by PANI in Bhiti development block, where it has been operating since its inception. Bhiti belongs to one of the relatively more populous and backward districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh. It has 109 village *panchayats* and 174 inhabited villages. The total population of the block according to 1991 census was 1,17,896 of which 60,456 (51.3%) are males and 57,440 (48.7%) are females. Approximately one fourth of the total population (23.1%) consists of the Scheduled Castes. The literacy rate in the development block is 30.4% (43.4% among males and 16.71% among females). Of the total working population, 64.3% are cultivators, 30% are agricultural labourers and 10.7% are engaged in other activities. Nearly 82% of the land holdings are less than one hectare.

3.3 THE EMERGENCE OF PANI

The emergence of PANI in the voluntary development sector owes to both, voluntaristic as well as the structural factors. In 1985, Bharat Bhai and his father (Paras Bhai) decided to start some kind of social activities in their ancestral village. Before 1985, they had been actively engaged in rural development work in Bihar and Orissa. They were influenced by the Gandhian way of bringing village development through constructive work. From 1986 to 1988, Bharat Bhai visited the neighbouring villages and closely observed the area. He used to move either on foot or bicycle. Sharp contradictions in the socio-economic conditions at the grassroots level were noticed by him. He came across numerous problems existing at the grassroots level in the area of basic health, education and the infrastructural facilities. He noticed the poor conditions of women particularly from the backward castes.

In 1988, they decided to open a free homeopathic dispensary in a nearby village. The decision to begin with health component was basically guided by two factors. First, they wanted to provide some basic health services to the poor and underprivileged. Second, through this kind of intervention they had planned to establish contacts and built up rapport with various sections of the village community, viz., the rich and the poor, the upper castes and the lower castes, and the males and the females. However, within a few months they realised the limitations of welfare

approach and distributing medicines through the dispensary. They could not get adequate support from the government agencies for providing primary health services in the area. Consequently it was decided to establish a VDO to initiate development and welfare activities, and ensure people's involvement in a more organised way. They made sustained efforts in this direction. Finally, in June 1989 PANI was established. Bharat Bhai and Paras Bhai respectively became the founder secretary and the founder chairman of PANI. They decided to locate the head-office of PANI in their own ancestral village.

Thus, on one hand the prolonged inadequacies and failures of the state welfare and development agencies to provide basic services to the people of the area motivated the leadership (i.e., the secretary and the founder chairman) to establish a new formal collective agency. On the other hand, the voluntary efforts made by them facilitated the formation of such an agency. It may be noted that during this phase, when the prospective nature and form of PANI were explored, discussed and conceptualised, basically the founder chairman and the secretary were involved. The association of other founding executive body members with PANI was more formal in nature developed through personal acquaintance and relationship with the founder chairman and/or with the secretary.

A simple reading of the Memorandum of Association (MoA)¹ and various annual reports show that the empowerment of rural masses, particularly the rural women has remained the primary objective of PANI. To quote,

It believes that women are the strongest harbingers of social change and through them the other sections of the rural community can be reached. It shouldered the burden to cater the need of needy, under-privileged, and vulnerable sections of the society in order to bring about social change with a basic thrust to involve the community and people, to build the nation and take up various developmental activities, National Integration, and Harmony.

(First Annual Report, 1990)

The people's (primarily the target group) involvement was conceptualised as an important component of the strategy to achieve the above aims and objectives. It has been repeatedly mentioned not only in the MoA but also in all its annual reports published till date. Again to quote from its *First Annual Report*, "PANI has adopted

¹ Refer to Appendix VIII for the detail list of objectives as declared in the Memorandum of Association (MoA).

the strategy of involving the local community at all levels and aims to solve the problems of the people by organising people's action."

Thus, from goal designing to strategy planning, PANI conceptualised the 'people' as the key factor to be taken into account. It may, however, be noted that despite the clear visualisation of the centrality of people's role, they were not involved in the process of conceptualising the identity of the organisation and its prospective strategy of intervention.

3.4 THE INTERVENTIONS

Over the years, PANI has implemented a number of projects widely varying in nature. However, community health with particular emphasis on women and children has remained its focal area of intervention. Table 3.1 presents a summary of the major projects launched by the organisation till date.

Table 3.1: Project Profile of PANI

Project Name	89-90	90-91	91-92	92-93	93-94	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98
Dhirendrabhai Mother & Child Care Centre	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Integrated Community Health Project			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Awareness, Training, Motivation & Action-I				✓	✓	✓			
Awareness on AIDS				✓	✓	✓			
Self Help Group					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RADHA Project						✓	✓		
Integrated Health Project							✓	✓	✓
KHOJ								✓	✓
People's Plan									✓
PANI Project								✓	✓
Awareness, Training, Motivation & Action-II								✓	✓
Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (National Women's Fund) Project								✓	✓
Reproductive and Child Health by Native Action									✓

A brief description of the major projects undertaken by PANI is presented below:

(1) **Community Health Projects (1989 Onwards)**: Community health projects with different names constitute the major intervention undertaken by PANI. The Integrated Community Health Project (ICHP), Integrated Health Project (IHP), RADHA projects have all aimed to provide the primary health services to the people. The basic objectives of these projects are: (a) to reduce infant mortality and morbidity; (b) to achieve universal immunisation in the project area; (c) to provide clean drinking water in the project villages; (d) to take up environmental sanitation, and (e) to enable people to become self-reliant on health related matters through appropriate preventive and curative measures. The primary target groups of the projects are the women and the children living in the 48 villages of the Bhati development block. The women from the Scheduled Castes, and living below the poverty line are given special attention. The landless agricultural labourers constitute another major target group.

The activities undertaken in these projects are of two kinds. The first includes the activities directly related to the health issues, viz., primary health services, safe motherhood, universal immunisation for pregnant women and children, preventive health education, and training of community level workers (CLWs) and women's group leaders. The second category includes the activities which indirectly help to improve the community health, viz., providing clean drinking water, constructing bio-gas plants, treadle pumps for vegetable farming, and initiating income generation activities for women.

These projects are implemented by a group of women community level workers, who are assisted by the health workers, auxiliary nurse and midwives (ANMs), and the project co-ordinators.

(2) **Awareness Training Motivation and Action (1992 Onwards)**: The basic component of this project is to organise awareness camps. The objective is to create awareness and confidence among the deprived sections of the community and motivate them for undertaking community based developmental and political action. Groups have been organised in the selected villages. The major issues discussed in these camps are related with the social structure, social problems, the fundamental rights, the political system, administrative structure at district, development block and the *panchayat* level, collective action, and welfare and development schemes of the

government.

Around 30 villages of the Bhiti development block have been covered under this project. Twenty five awareness and motivation camps for rural youths were organised.

(3) KHOJ Project (1996 Onwards): The project is being implemented in nine villages of Sohawal development block in Faizabad district. The basic objective is to improve the overall health status of the community with particular emphasis on the deprived and marginalised sections through an integrated approach to health and development. The project aims to involve the local community, organise pressure groups for maximum mobilisation of government resources, and initiate programmes to help the marginalised people in increasing their income by providing vocational training and the raw materials for production.

In this project, PANI made use of traditional fairs and festivals to reach out to the community. It has provided health education through health exhibitions, health stalls and street plays. It has formed non-formal centres in each project village for recreation, education and training activities. Village meetings are being organised with the help of *panchayats*, women's groups and youth groups. It has also organised health fete in each project villages to spread health education. Schools have been approached and the teachers have been given an orientation training on health related issues. A team of community organisers, ANMs, a doctor and the project co-ordinator who is the overall incharge of the project is implementing the project.

(4) People's Plan (1996 Onwards): This project was started in Kurebhar development block of Sultanpur district. It is concentrated in one village *panchayat* covering eight villages. PANI has been making efforts to involve the local administration and the *panchayats* in identifying and prioritising the developmental needs and priorities of the area. It has used primary health care and community health education as the entry point activities. It has started children's school in a few villages. The organisation has done intensive situation analysis and need assessment through house to house survey, group interviews and participatory rural appraisal (PRA) in all the target villages. Interaction camps and wall writings have been used as instruments for people's education. It has

constituted separate groups of men and women in each project village.

The project is being co-ordinated by a project co-ordinator. A team of social workers along with the community level workers is responsible for the implementation of the project. The primary goal of the project is to create an environment and enable the community to take up development activities with the collaboration of the state development agencies.

(5) PANI Project (1996 Onwards): In 1996 PANI launched this project for children's welfare and education, in five villages of Bhiti development block. The basic objective of the project is to promote a process of sustainable community development and rural reconstruction initiatives through a programme of holistic development of children. The project targets the children from the families living below the poverty line (i.e., having monthly income below Rs. 800 per month). Preference has been given to the children coming from the weaker sections of the society such as landless labourers. Girl child, handicapped children and orphans are selected on a priority basis. Under this project 1 to 2 children in the age group of 3 to 10 years are selected from one family. The organisation supports their educational and other basic needs. A school for children is opened in each of the project villages. Regular health check-ups are organised. A team of project co-ordinator, social workers, health workers and the school teachers is implementing the project.

(6) Reproductive and Child Health by Native Action (1997 Onwards): In the year 1997, PANI launched this project in the entire Jaisingpur development block of Sultanpur district. The aim of the project is to control and reduce the growth rate of the population in the project area through information and communication activities and supplying the family planning methods using community based distribution approach. The major objectives of the project are to educate the target group about the importance of family planning, to provide family planning services to eligible couples, to create awareness regarding reproductive health, and to promote mother and child health care and universal immunisation activities in the project area.

During 1997, the organisation had started conducting socio-economic survey in the project area. A team of project co-ordinator, community organisers and the

community level workers are implementing the project.

To summarise, the activities of PANI can be broadly analysed in three distinct phases:

- *The phase of ice-breaking* (April, 1989 to March, 1991)
- *The phase of formalisation* (April, 1991 to March, 1996).
- *The phase of expansion* (April 1996 onwards).

During the first five months after its inception (i.e., upto September 1989) PANI did not start any organised activity in its field area. On September 10, 1989, Dharendra Bhai Mother and Child Care Centre (DMCCC) was started at Miranpur village. The secretary made personal efforts to get an ANM deputed at the centre from the government run Primary Health Centre (PHC) to carry out immunisation work. Up to April 1991 (i.e., during a period of two years), the activities of PANI were basically centre-based. Villagers used to visit the centre either for the treatment of seasonal diseases or for immunisation. A few field-based activities of short duration like construction of 45 biogas plants, installation of 25 low lift treadle pumps, environmental awareness campaign, and school health project in five schools were also taken up. According to the secretary the primary reason for undertaking these small projects of diverse nature was the persuasion from the concerned donor agencies to implement these projects in the working area of PANI.

During the first two years, seven different types of activities involving different target groups were initiated. For example, the health centre called DMCCC was meant for all sections of the community. A separate welfare project was launched for the handicapped. Promotion and installation of treadle pumps and biogas plants targeted relatively well off farmers mostly from one upper caste. They were primarily identified through personal contacts. These initial project-based activities were bound by the project specifications. The heavy engagements in fulfilling the time-bound activities could not provide adequate space and time to build up adequate rapport with the villagers and create a congenial atmosphere to carry out community based activities in the villages. During this phase, PANI developed the image of a *hospital/health centre* engaged in providing health services to people.

During the phase of formalisation (i.e., from April 1991 to March 1995), PANI was primarily engaged in implementing the Integrated Community Health Project

(ICHP). It was the first foreign aided project. This project was initially launched in 26 villages (approximately 60 hamlets) covering a total population of nearly 23,000. However, in 1996-97 it was being implemented in only 23 villages. The project aimed at enabling the people to be self-reliant in health matters through appropriate preventive and curative measures. Actually till 1996-97 (except a one-year break during 1995-96) ICHP remained the single major project of PANI. During 1994-95 to 1995-96 PANI expanded its community health project to 25 more villages through Integrated Health Project (IHP). During 1992-93 to 1994-95, it undertook an awareness project called, Awareness, Training, Motivation, and Action (ATMA). It was being implemented parallelly with the ICHP in the same villages. The first phase of this project (i.e., ATMA-I) focussed upon training and motivation of youths on various issues of concern to them. However, after the completion of the project no follow up action was taken. During field study, I could not find a single active youth groups.

The year 1996-97 was an eventful period for PANI. From 1996-97 PANI started the second phase of ATMA (ATMA-II). It focused on training, motivation and awareness building among the village *panchayat* members, particularly the women *panchayat* members from the Bhiti development block². However, in this phase also the motivation and awareness building could not be linked with other delivery type projects like Integrated Community Health Project (ICHP) or Integrated Health Project (IHP). In the same block, PANI launched a long-term project for the welfare of poor children with the help of Christian Children Fund (CCF). In 1996-97 PANI also expanded its project activities to three new development blocks of the neighbouring Sultanpur and Faizabad districts. The People's Plan Project (funded by Action Aid India) in the Kurebhar development block initiated systematic efforts to involve the local community in the project activities. Similarly the KHOJ project, supported by Voluntary Health Association of India (VHAI), at Sohawal development block of Faizabad district is pursuing the goal of holistic community development in the target area. Both these projects have concentrated their activities in a pocket of eight to nine villages. The latest project on family planning and reproductive health, however, covers all the 120 villages of the Jaisingpur development block of Sultanpur district.

² Around this time the Government of India decided to strengthen the *punchayati raj* institutions through the involvement of voluntary organisations and made lot of funds available to voluntary organisations for this purpose.

Contrary to the People's Plan and the KHOJ project, this project does not allow any space for accommodating the people's suggestions and ideas.

The above discussion shows that PANI has worked on a wide range of issues. Although it started its interventions through health related activities, it slowly diversified its activities. These activities implemented by it are invariably associated with some projects, lasting from a few months to a few years. Table 3.2 depicts the broad areas in which the organisation has worked so far.

The huge diversity in the nature and types of various projects undertaken by PANI does not present any guide to a pattern or direction in which the organisation is moving. Different projects have different objectives, target groups and varying mode of interventions. This has not come out under a strategic planning at the organisational level. Consequently, it is difficult to find out a meaningful relationship between the objectives of these projects and the aim of PANI as conceptualised in the Memorandum of Association (MoA). This leads to multifarious ambiguities, contradictions and conflicts, which will be discussed in the following sections. However, in spite of diversification, 'community health' has remained the thrust area of PANI.

3.5 THE MODE OF INTERVENTION

To enter the field a VDO is expected to evolve a mode of intervention keeping in view its resources, the context, and the objectives of the intervention. The main problem of the VDOs in the South is that due to their ideological and resource dependence on outside donors they do not have a consistent approach of intervention. Depending on the requirements of the donors they are bound to adopt different criteria for selecting the field and the target groups in different projects. As the organisation matures the role of leadership is also bound to change. While the early actions of the leaders are prompted more by their vision and their philosophy of social action, the project related action is governed by the requirements of the projects and donors. Thus the advanced phases of development of the VDO exhibit a machine model of action in which the old concern for voluntaristic transformation and creative thoughts is greatly diluted. It is replaced by functional requisites of sustenance and survival. This section will address to these issues associated with the mode of intervention in the field.

Table 3.2: Areas and Issues undertaken by PANI

I. HEALTH AND NUTRITION
i) Awareness generation regarding drinking water and health.
ii) Health among school going children.
iii) Community health.
iv) Providing family planning services.
v) Awareness generation regarding the sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS.
vi) Milk distribution.
vii) Iodised salt testing.
II. WOMEN AND CHILDREN
i) Maternity and child health.
ii) Environmental cleanliness.
iii) Vocational training.
iv) Promoting self-help groups.
v) Income generation activities among women.
III. ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY CONSERVATION
i) Construction/installation of Bio-gas Plants.
ii) Installation of smokeless <i>chullahs</i> (ovens).
iii) Plantation.
iv) Environmental awareness and protection.
IV. ECONOMY/AGRICULTURE/IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT
i) Promotion and installation of treadle pump.
ii) Information on usage of pesticides.
V. TRAINING/AWARENESS GENERATION/EDUCATION CAMPAIGN
i) Awareness, Training, Motivation, Action.
ii) People's Education.
VI. SOCIAL WELFARE
i) Rehabilitation of the handicapped people.
ii) Communal harmony.
VII. INSTITUTION BUILDING
i) Staff development.
ii) Organising youths
iii) Awareness generation regarding government policies and programmes.

3.5.1 Lack of Methodological Consistency

Since its inception till April 1991 (i.e., till the first major project, the Integrated Community Health Project was sanctioned) the organisational activities in the villages were basically limited to a few short-duration projects of varying nature. Basically, the mode of intervention during this period was centre-based through Dhieren Bhai Mother and Child Care Centre (DMCCC). A few welfare and developmental activities were taken up in the field, which were strictly project specific. The workers were engaged in carrying out the project related activities. During this period, the secretary was busy in contacting the potential donors who could support the organisation on a long-term basis. Thus both the organisational staff and the leadership failed to establish the necessary link with the potential target groups and to develop rapport with them. They did not address the emerging problems of the area as prioritised by the people. They failed to smodify their mode of intervention as suggested by the people.

PANI almost invariably entered the field with some projects. These projects were of varying nature. The guidelines made in the project proposals decided the mode of intervention in the field. There were considerable differences in the mode of intervention adopted in different projects. Even within a single project there had been variations in the mode of intervention at different points of time. The nature of involvement of the grassroots workers in the field and their interaction with the target group was decided by the concerned project co-ordinators. Take for example, the first major project, namely, the Integrated Community Health Project (ICHP).

ICHP was designed to provide primary health services, reduce infant mortality and morbidity, provide clean drinking water, and enable people to be self-reliant on health matters through appropriate preventive and curative measures. The project proposal also specified the concrete steps to be taken while implementing the project, like, training of village level health workers, providing basic health care facilities at the village level, and improving environmental sanitation with community participation. The first major task in this project was to conduct a baseline survey. Advertisements were brought out and pamphlets were distributed in the project area to select a community level worker (CLW) from each project village. Most of the CLWs reported that they came to know about PANI either through the pamphlets or through personal contacts.

The selection of the CLWs was thus, based upon personal/individual contacts and efforts. In none of the project villages, open meetings with the community were organised. The target group was not introduced to the nature and objectives of PANI. Consequently, a majority of them remained ignorant about the purpose of the organisation. It was only after the CLWs were selected and they organised meetings in the villages that the target group came to know about PANI and its project activities.

In the beginning, the organisational staff sought to form people's groups and involve them as part of their strategy of intervention. Just after the completion of the survey work, Village Health Committees (VHCs) were formed in all the 26 project villages. Each committee had on an average 20 women as members. These committees were supposed to identify, diagnose, and refer cases to the primary health centre, promote preventive measures, organise family health insurance, and select a traditional birth attendant in each village to become a CLW.

It was observed that although VHCs were supposed to select the CLWs, in reality it was the leadership, who selected them. The CLWs in turn selected group leaders of the VHCs with the help of other committee members. The women were motivated to contribute Rs. 2/- per month to form a small saving fund. The group leaders were trained on community health related issues. They were supposed to organise periodic meetings of the VHC and inform the members about whatever they had learnt during the training programmes. It may be noted that, although there was one CLW covering around 140 households, only one VHC was formed per village involving 20 women. Thus effectively, only 20 households could be involved regularly in the project activities. Also the CLW was supposed to simply assist the group leader in conducting the meetings, but in practice all the work from gathering information to report writing, and collection of fund was solely done by the CLWs. Consequently, the CLWs' active association with the villagers was limited primarily to 20 households, who were members of the VHCs. In the beginning, group leaders of the VHC showed some interest in carrying out their responsibilities. However, when they did not receive expected support and co-operation from the other fellow members, their interest started declining. Some of the group leaders started thinking that the work of VHCs was basically the CLW's responsibility since she was being paid for her work.

In April 1992, the community level workers (CLWs) were instructed by the project co-ordinator to form the self help groups (SHGs also called *Mahila Mandals*).

Thus two parallel groups became functional in each village. Although it was perceived that the role of the CLW would be just to support and co-ordinate the activities and ensure smooth functioning of these groups, in reality the CLWs were doing everything. Later on it was decided by another project co-ordinator in consultation with the leadership to focus upon the SHGs, and discuss the health related issues (which was originally supposed to be discussed in the VHC meetings) in the SHG meeting. Gradually, the VHC started getting defunct and attention was diverted to the SHGs. Consequently, the activities, which were supposed to be undertaken by the VHCs were slowly lost on the way.

The basic purpose of SHGs was to involve the members in income generating activities. It aimed at making the target group financially self-reliant. However, except for the routine collection of monthly contributions and disbursement of some small loans to the members to meet their emergency requirements, no concrete income generating activity could be started. The increasing attention on the SHG activities also resulted in the gradual withdrawal of the women belonging to the relatively well off families, particularly the women from the upper caste. The upper caste women perceived the SHGs to be meant for helping the poor women. They failed to relate SHGs with themselves.

When I brought these inconsistencies in the mode of intervention into the notice of the concerned project co-ordinator, he went through the previous project reports but could not explain the reasons for them. Interestingly, the co-ordinator had discussed some of these issues with the leadership and they decided to revive some of the activities, which were dropped earlier. The CLWs were not consulted before taking this decision. The new measures, however, faced severe criticism by the CLWs on the ground of their impracticability.

The role of the project co-ordinators in the mode of intervention is primarily decided by the leadership and guided by the project proposals. For example, in the People's Plan project there is no provision for motorcycle for the project co-ordinator. He usually visits the village on a bicycle and spends three to four hours in one village. He would contact and discuss with the villagers about the project as well as the non-project activities. But in another project, the project co-ordinator visits the field on a motorcycle. He would cover three to four villages in one day. In each village, he would visit the children's school, inspect the register, enquire about the causes of low

attendance from the school teachers, give them some suggestions and would then proceed to the next centre. Little interaction with any of the parents or the villager about the school takes place. Thus, from the beginning, the decisions and actions of the project co-ordinators to a large extent are decided by the specifications made in the project proposals. Even if the concerned co-ordinator feels the need to modify the strategy or the activities, he finds it very difficult to incorporate them. Consequently, their approach becomes instrumental in nature. This process has become more visible particularly after 1996 when the organisation expanded its activities into other districts.

Again, mode of intervention is considerably different in different field areas. For example, the mode of intervention in the People's Plan project is different from all the other projects. It is relatively a long-term project (for ten years). During the first year Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercises were conducted in the selected villages, needs were identified, and the project was suitably designed. A close interaction with the funding partners was maintained. The villagers were involved in the selection of community level workers (CLWs). The CLWs helped in the selection of children, and school teachers to run the schools. The community was instructed in clear terms about their contribution and nature of participation in running these schools. The community had participated and contributed in constructing the schools. The workers made efforts to ensure their involvement in monitoring and co-ordinating the school activities. However, in the CCF area, people's contribution in running the children's school is missing. The target group in this case is mere the recipient of benefits. Thus, even in the projects of similar nature PANI has adopted different strategies. The ideology and preferences of the concerned donor agencies are primarily responsible for these differences.

Similarly, in the latest project on family welfare and family planning, there is little space for people's contribution. The project proposal includes the activities and a fixed time-frame for completion of various activities, viz., the number of training programmes, number of eligible couples to be registered and protected, quantum of family planning inputs to be provided etc. However, in the case of the Action Aid sponsored project, the staff members have taken up some sensitive issues related to local *panchayats* and agricultural land. They have started organising and conscientising the target group on these issues. It may be noted that the increasing load of project-based activities in different field areas has preoccupied the staff. It is yet to be seen that

how far PANI will be able to take up people's issues, which are highly sensitive, full of uncertainties, and demanding a lot of free time and space.

3.5.2 Variable Criteria for Field Selection

Field selection is an important dimension of the mode of intervention. In this context, a VDO has to resolve the issues like, where to begin from, what should be the basis for selecting the field area, how much area to cover, when and how far to expand the activities, etc. In PANI, decisions on these issues have been invariably taken by the leadership and the concerned donor agencies. The donor agencies fix up the criteria for field selection in a majority of the projects. Since different donors have different ideologies and priorities, there is a lack of coherent and consistent approach in the selection of villages at the organisational level. The dilemma of sustenance and security of the organisation further compel the leadership to accept the project according to the donors' priorities and preferences. As a result of which the organisation is left with no option but to expand its working area in an incoherent way.

During the first two years, the activities of PANI were concentrated in one village (i.e., Miranpur) where it had opened a mother and child care centre. In 1991, it launched the Integrated Community Health Project (ICHP) in 26 villages, which was reduced to 23 villages in 1997. In 1994 another community health project, namely, the Integrated Health Project (IHP) was launched in 17 villages. During the next few years, IHP project was expanded to some more villages. Some of the villages in the ICHP project were even dropped due to discontinuation of work by the CLWs. In 1997 PANI was active in 48 villages of Bhati development block. The year-wise change in the number of villages covered by PANI is shown in the Table 3.3.

In the initial projects like ICHP and IHP, the villages were selected on the basis of their distance from the head-office of the organisation. Accordingly, some villages were situated near the head-office (i.e., within one to four kilometres) and some others were situated at a moderate distance (i.e., within four to ten kilometres) from the head-office. A few villages were situated in the remote areas, far away (i.e., beyond 10 kilometres) from the head-office. The final selection of the villages was, however, done on the availability of the community level worker (CLW) in a particular village. It was observed that some of the ICHP and IHP villages were not properly connected with

Table 3.3: Area of Operation (Number of Villages)

Year	Bhiti	Sohawal	Kurebehar	Jaisinghpur
1989-90	1	-	-	-
1990-91	1	-	-	-
1991-92	26	-	-	-
1992-93	26	-	-	-
1993-94	40	-	-	-
1994-95	45	-	-	-
1995-96	40	-	-	-
1996-97	48	9	8	-
1997-98	48	9	8	120

other villages, which created problems in monitoring and co-ordination.

In the recent projects, like KHOJ and People's Plan, the donor agencies have preferred an intensive approach of intervention. Accordingly, in these project areas the organisation has adopted a cluster of villages from one or two village *panchayats*. Priority has been given to the socially and economically backward village *panchayats*, situated far away from the block headquarter. However, in the latest project on family planning and welfare, supported by SIFPSA, the organisation has to cover all the villages (approximately 120) of one entire development block. Thus so far, the expansion of field area has been guided more by the preferences of donor agencies rather than following a well-planned coherent strategy at the organisational level. The leadership and the project co-ordinators also accept the inconsistency in the expansion of the organisational work to new area.

3.5.3 Changing Role of the Leadership

The nature of involvement of the leadership in the process of intervention significantly affects the overall quality of intervention. During the initial years, the secretary was primarily occupied in designing the projects, contacting the potential donors, and getting them sanctioned. Their contacts with the field and the target groups were limited. This adversely affected the proper conceptualisation of the

grassroots requirements by the leadership while designing the first project (i.e., the ICHP project). In its proposal, the secretary had initially proposed an extensive approach. In the response letter, dated June 29, 1990, the funding partner raised certain doubts about the proposal. It asked,

Whether it will be realistic to assume that one CLW will look after all the households in the village? Will it be realistic to assume that one health organiser and one community organiser (i.e., supervisor level worker) will be effective and efficient in supervising 60 villages?

The funding partner suggested to reduce the project area from 60 villages and adopt a relatively more intensive approach. It opined that a CLW could effectively handle only about 30 households in order to make it a real community based programme. The secretary finally agreed to reduce the number of working villages from 60 to 26. However, it decided to keep one CLW for a population of 140 households.

With increase in the number of projects during the subsequent years, the presence of the leadership in the field became negligible. The secretary accepted this fact in his personal interview. Acknowledging the change in his nature of engagement he said: "Now I am engaged more in external meetings, networking, and official meetings and the contact with the field is maintained only through the staff." Major reasons cited for this were his heavy involvement to liaison with the sponsors, the district administration, other government officials, and attending various meetings, seminars, workshops, etc. all over the country to establish the reputation of PANI. This, according to the secretary, has adversely affected the quality of work in the field. Citing one example from the KHOJ project area he regretted that had he made some prior visits to that area he could have given some concrete suggestions regarding the construction of well etc. He was even worried about the fact that people may get totally cut off from him because of his lack of presence in the field and lack of interaction with them.

His frequency of interaction with the supervisors and CLWs has also been reduced significantly, particularly after the increase in number of projects. Even after their repeated requests he could not visit the field areas. His occasional visits to the field, however, significantly affect the work at the grassroots level. After one such visit to the KHOJ project area, one staff member commented, "After the visit of the

secretary, pace of work has accelerated. He must come at least once in a month.” Interestingly, the secretary would try to justify his lack of presence in the field on the name of decentralisation. He would often tell the project co-ordinators, “Now it is Rahul, Jitendra, and Ajit’s (the project co-ordinators) responsibility to carry on. Bharat (he himself) won’t go to Sohawal or Kurebehar.” However, his intentions have not been actualised on the ground. The project co-ordinators hesitate to take even trivial project related decisions on their own (this will be further elaborated in the latter sections).

3.5.4 The Particularistic Approach

The project based mode of intervention followed by PANI, primarily focuses on its target groups, i.e., women from the weaker sections of the community. Although, the men from the village were initially involved in meetings and informal discussions, they slowly started losing interest due to women-centred approach of the organisation. Since the CLWs were women, they interacted largely with the women. The heavy prevalence of *purdha* (veil) system restricted the involvement of the men in women’s activities. The men from the village could be involved occasionally, only when some male staff, (viz., the community organiser or the vice-president) would visit the village. The majority of the activities in the village carried out by the CLWs were such that the villagers started perceiving them as midwives engaged in safe delivery and distributing some tablets to the pregnant women and children. This particularistic approach slowly resulted into a decreasing frequency of interaction with the male members of the community. This approach also alienated the other sections of the community from the activities of PANI.

3.6 THE CAPACITY BUILDING PROCESS

This section discusses about those inputs and elements, which the different collectivities perceived essential to improve the overall efforts of the organisation in delivering the inputs and achieving its goal. It was found that different collectivities variously emphasise the importance of different elements. Based on their responses, broadly three categories of elements can be identified. These are the human resource, the infrastructure, and the sustenance capacity. It should be emphasised here, that our

primary concern in this study is to understand how these three elements have developed over the years and affected the different collectivities.

3.6.1 The Human Resource Capacity

PANI began its activities in the field as an informal association of the secretary, the vice-chairman and a few volunteers who were personally known to them. It should be noted that it had emerged as a formal association in the form of a structured executive body. The executive body is basically engaged in making the policy level decisions. This executive body of PANI is a blending of some senior Gandhian workers and young VDO leaders from the region. It has a founder chairman, an executive chairperson, a vice-chairperson, a secretary, and six members. The detailed list of the first executive body is shown in Appendix IX. The founder chairman and the executive chairman were actively associated with the Gandhian and Sarvodaya Movement and later on with the premier Gandhian centre, Khadigram, in Bihar. Both of them have over 40 years of experience in community service and developmental work. The vice-chairperson and the secretary give full-time to the organisation and manage the day-to-day affairs. The vice-chairperson co-ordinates the field activities and the secretary manages the administrative, financial, and networking activities. Basically it is the secretary, who has provided active leadership to the organisation since its inception.

Till 1991, basically the vice-chairman and a few volunteers-cum-workers at the grassroots level were implementing all the activities of the organisation. The first major project on community health (viz., the Integrated Community Health Project) in 1991 introduced a formal hierarchical organisational structure at the implementation level. Over the years, PANI has developed a team of project co-ordinators, social workers, community organisers, health workers, auxiliary nurse and midwives (ANMs), and community level workers (CLWs), to implement various activities. They are organised in a hierarchical structure as shown in Figure 3.1.

The staff associated directly with the implementation of the project-related activities in the field can be categorised as the *core staff* and the *field staff*. *Core staff* are the full time employees, who are paid a monthly salary. They include secretary³,

³ This too adds a dimension to the various types of ambiguities/complexities in the VDOs. The dual roles of leadership and employee performed by the secretary creates conflicts and dilemmas among the staff.

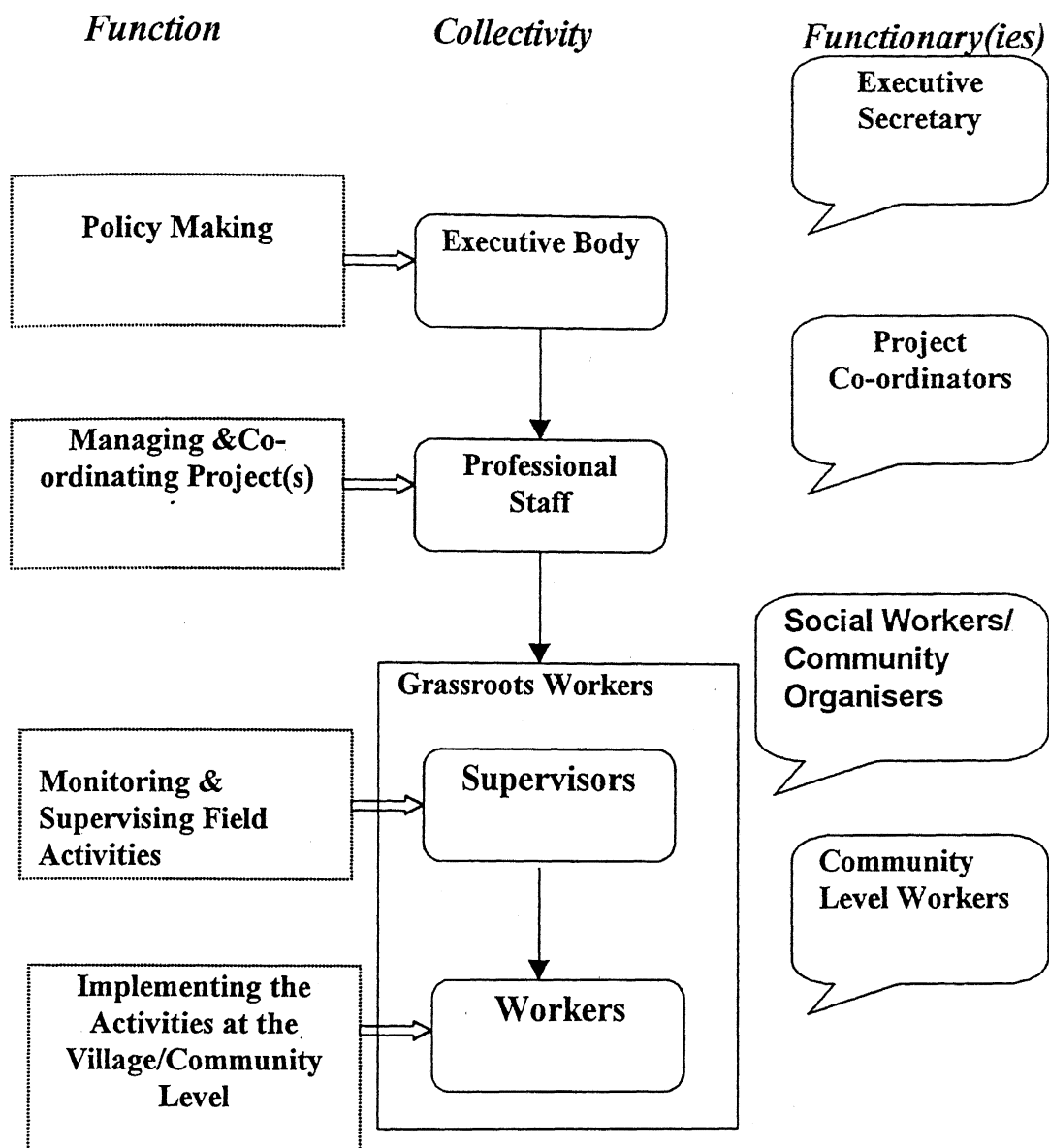


Fig. 3.1: Organogram of PANI

project co-ordinators and supervisors like the community organisers, the social workers, the ANMs, the doctors, etc. The *field staff* refers to the community level workers, who are supposed to volunteer their service in their own village and are paid some token honorarium.

The project co-ordinators, who constitute the second level in the organisational hierarchy, are professionals possessing formal educational and technical degree in community health and social work. All of them are men. They are basically from the

urban background. They are selected on the basis of their formal qualifications and previous experiences in the field of social work. The supervisory level staff members like the social workers, the ANMs, the community organisers constitute the third level in the organisational structure. A majority of them have completed higher secondary education. Out of 52 supervisors, only six were women. All of them are locals. The community level workers (CLWs) are at the bottom-most level in the organisational structure. They are mostly literate village women, belonging to the villages adopted by the organisation.

Since 1991, the organisation has been constantly receiving projects of varying nature. The number of staff members at different levels has increased. Table 3.4 shows the annual increase in number of the field and core staff.

Table 3.4: Trend in the Number of Staff

Year	Core staff	Field staff
1990	1	13
1991	5	31
1992	2	40
1993	3	34
1994	6	28
1995	10	50
1996	20	80

The core staff of PANI can be further classified into three broad categories on the basis of the number of years they have spent in the organisation. It is shown in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5: Number of Workers by Years of Work in PANI

Years completed	No.
1 to 2	9
3 to 5	5
More than 5	6
Total	20

Out of 20 core team members during 1996-97, six have been working for more than five years, and five have been working for three to five years. Rest of the members joined PANI during the previous two years. Many of the previous core team members left the organisation after working for one to two years. This has adversely affected the capacity building process particularly in building a *team* of motivated workers. Thus, so far the organisation has primarily managed with a floating group of workers, who join the work for a short period and leave the organisation as soon as they get a better avenue.

The field staff is basically engaged in community health activities at the village level. They are trained and equipped with basic information on primary health issues. The concept of CLWs is aimed at providing independent volunteer-cum-health workers in each of the project villages. However, majority of them lacked confidence to work independently as visualised in the project. They displayed feelings of insecurity. For example, a majority of the CLWs from the IHP project (which was to be closed within a year at the time of this study) was worried about their future prospects after the completion of the project. Similarly, when the ICHP project was stopped during 1994-96, out of 26 CLWs, only five to six CLWs continued to provide health services in their respective villages. A majority of the CLWs perceive themselves as hired employees of the organisation. Thus, even among the grassroots workers, PANI has largely remained unsuccessful in building a team of motivated personnel.

Besides these mainline staff, PANI has 12 full time support staff. They include office co-ordinators, accountants, clerks/typists, computer-operators, drivers, helpers, and watchmen. They assist in office work like report typing, account maintenance, documentation and maintenance of the office, training centre, vehicles etc.

3.6.2 Infrastructural Capacity

PANI began its work in a rented room. In 1991, it shifted to a thatched hut constructed on a community land donated for running the mother and child care centre. The centre carried out its activities from there for about two years. Later on it constructed a *pucca* room with the help of financial provisions made in the ICHP project. The office works were carried out in a room located in the personal house of the secretary. It should be noted that although at the time of inception, the leadership

had visualised the people's role as a crucial component for achieving the goal of the organisation, the participation from the people was almost nil in the process of infrastructural capacity building. Even the community land donated for constructing the health centre could be managed primarily due to personal contacts and efforts of the leadership with the *panchayat* officials. Ironically, the construction work of the centre was perceived by the villagers as some personal construction work of the secretary.

From 1991 to 1996, the work of PANI was confined to a single development block. During this period, it acquired a motor bike, an ambulance, some furnitures, and other paraphernalia for the office. In 1996 the organisation received three major projects. These projects suddenly brought a number of inputs in the name of infrastructural capacity building. At the time of the study, PANI had a computer, xerox machine, typewriters and other office equipments. The organisation had built up a training-cum-seminar hall with residential facilities. The training centre and the head-office had separate power generators. There were two separate offices in the field area. It also possessed one jeep, one ambulance and 10 motorbikes. The community organisers and the health workers were provided a bicycle to increase their mobility in the field.

However, throughout this process of capacity building, the leadership failed to ensure people's involvement. It has generated misconceptions and ambiguity about the real identity of the organisation. While some people take PANI as a primary health centre, the other more conscious villagers perceive it as a private organisation which somehow manages to get foreign money and utilises it for the personal benefits. During the fieldwork, numerous such comments were received from the different sections of the community.

3.6.3 Sustenance Capacity

Since its inception, the more or less continuous flow of fund (primarily the foreign funds) has played a crucial role in the sustenance of the organisation. It is interesting to note that the leadership was quite assured of getting financial support even before the registration of the organisation. Starting from one donor in 1990, it has now seven major donors. They are BILANCE, MISEREOR, VHAI, ACTION AID,

IGSSS, CCF and SIFPSA. Although, the secretary claims that they have seriously started thinking in the direction of making the organisation financially self-reliant, so far no efforts have been initiated in this direction.

An important point to be emphasised in the context of the overall process of capacity building is the varying degree of priorities given to different elements by different collectivities. While the leadership visualised the capacity building in terms of increasing number of qualified human resources, close networking with the other VDOs and a strong infrastructural base, the professionals emphasised more on technically trained grassroots workers who can efficiently perform their roles in the field. Professionals also perceived the lack of financial self-reliance as the major impediment against the improvement of the organisational effectiveness. The grassroots workers perceived that to carry out voluntary activities, values like commitment to the cause, hard work, and motivation were the most important components. They also felt that a sustainable system of proper financial security for the workers was essential to build up a team of motivated workers. The target group, on the other hand, related the capacity of the organisation in terms of its capability to solve their problems. Their involvement and participation in the organisational activities considerably affected the performance of the organisation. However, it was observed that the varying importance given to different elements by different collectivities have generated more confusions and conflicts among them. (This is discussed in the following section.)

3.7 INTERNAL INTERACTIONS

Internal interactions, in this study, refer to the interaction among the leadership, the professionals and the grassroots workers. VDOs being an ambiguous zone incorporating the formal characteristics of bureaucracy and the informalities of associations, exhibit a complex interaction pattern. The internal dynamics seem to be swinging between formal and informal space. Some of the associated dilemmas and ambiguities are discussed below.

3.7.1 Gap between the Perception and Action

The nature of interaction among diverse collectivities, to a large extent, depends upon their perception about the objectives and the strategies of the organisation and their own roles and relationships. The responses received from various functionaries in this context, have been presented in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6: Objectives and Strategies of PANI

Respondents*	Objectives of the organisation	Strategies
Chief functionaries		
Founder Chairman	National integration; People's welfare (specially in the health sector); Self reliance.	Gandhian (non-violent methods)
Vice-Chairman	Social transformation and psychological change to meet the basic needs of the people, and create equality.	People's participation.
Secretary	Social harmony; Equality of all.	People's involvement; Participation, contribution.
Project Co-ordinators		
C ₁ , C ₄	National integration; Building capacity of the target group.	People's involvement.
C ₂ , C ₃	Social and national integration; Raising standard of living; fulfilling people's basic requirements.	People's participation.
C ₅	People's development.	People's participation.
Supervisors		
S ₂ , S ₅ , S ₆ , S ₁₁	Removing social and economic inequality.	People's participation; Facilitation.
S ₄ , S ₁₅ , S ₁₈	Social change, social harmony.	-
S ₇ , S ₁₇	Women's development.	People's participation.
S ₁ , S ₃ , S ₈ , S ₁₂ , S ₁₄ , S ₁₆ , S ₁₉	People's welfare and development.	People's participation.
S ₉ , S ₁₃	Integrated village development.	People's education.
S ₁₀	Poverty alleviation.	-

* The subscript shows the serial number of the functionary.

It may be noted, that the understanding about the objectives and the means to attain those objectives among the respondents do not show significant variations. It is primarily due to the inputs and information shared by them during regular meetings, training programmes and workshops.

However, it should be emphasised that they also admit a considerable gap between the aims of PANI on the conceptual plane and the objectives of various projects actually implemented by it. This fact was accepted by the participants in a workshop on, "PANI: aims and strategy" organised by PANI. All the participants in the workshop were the staff of PANI. In the workshop, the participants felt that only recently the organisation has started making some efforts to bridge the gap between the theory and practice. To quote a senior project co-ordinator, "In various programmes and projects undertaken by the organisation, the objective of the organisation is not clearly reflected. The problem is that the objectives in the ideas or vision are not being actualised in the programmes."

The gap between the expectations and actual interventions leads to conflicts. One can observe contentions about dos and don'ts to be followed in the fields and the meetings. For example, the founder chairman often encourages the project co-ordinators, the supervisors, and the community level workers to take up mobilising stand against the erring governmental officials or the elected *panchayat* members engaged in corrupt activities. This, however, does not get a formal approval and support from the secretary or the office secretary. Again, the founder chairman is highly sensitive to certain issues related to ethics, morality, and personal conduct. He along with a few other staff strongly opposes the habit of chewing tobacco, especially during the meetings, but many of the staff members, the secretary and the office secretary have this habit. These gaps between the theory and practice, both at the organisational level and at the level of roles, adversely affect the voluntaristic tendencies among the workers, especially among the grassroots workers. This generates conflicts and contradictions. They fail to draw a stable meaning out of these gaps and contradictions. This results in reconstructing a new perception about the organisation. The workers in general start perceiving it just like any other private organisation contrary to the basic spirit of VDOs.

3.7.2 Between the Formal and Informal Processes

Usually the grassroots VDOs are perceived as small, flexible and informal organisations. PANI also *appears* to be following primarily a flexible and informal work culture. The staff members have not been given any fixed timetable. There is no

formal job description. The roles and responsibilities are frequently changed depending upon the context and requirements. Staff at the same level of hierarchy frequently take assistance from each other as and when required. Informal meetings and discussions among the leadership, the co-ordinators and the grassroots staff are held frequently to discuss organisational matters. Functionaries at different levels of hierarchy, viz., the vice-president, the project co-ordinators, and the grassroots staff share the same building for residential purpose.

Yet, these informal characteristics and relations are closely associated with formal processes. For example, although there is no fixed timetable, every staff is supposed to devote a minimum number of hours to their work. Depending upon the nature and the urgency of work, sometimes they start working early in the morning and sometimes they work upto late night. There is no concept of Sunday or any other holiday. If a staff is present at the centre or in the office then he is expected to do some work even if it is a holiday.

Similarly, the informal meetings and discussions are supplemented with formal fortnightly or monthly meetings of the staff and the leadership. While in the informal meetings both the organisational and personal affairs are discussed, the formal meetings focus upon the issues related to the organisational work. During formal meetings, the subordinates are given necessary instructions about their job responsibilities. Both the formal and informal discussions cover the project as well as the non-project activities. Although the proceedings of the formal meetings are reported and documented regularly, there is no formal mechanism to follow up the decisions taken in the previous meetings. For example in the July 3, 1997 meeting of the founder chairman, the project co-ordinator and the CLWs of IHP project, the problem of liquor in certain villages was discussed in detail and it was decided to start a campaign against it. However, in the next meeting the discussion remained confined to the IHP project and nothing was discussed about the liquor issue. According to the staff, the pressure of the project leaves little scope to go for other activities. The time in formal meetings is mostly consumed in evaluating the work progress and making action plan till next meeting.

Again, the job responsibilities are usually conveyed orally either in meetings or personally. Responsibilities of the staff are assigned in meetings and are recorded in the minutes of the meeting. However, the staff frequently go beyond the assigned

responsibilities and assist each other in case of need. This informal practice creates confusions and conflicts when the seniors *formally question* the sub-ordinates on their failure to fulfil the assigned responsibilities. For example, in formal meetings, supervisors demand fortnightly progress reports from the community level workers. However, they fail to take note of their informal engagements during the intervening period. Sometimes, they get involved in other works assigned informally by some other seniors or the assistance given to their colleagues. This creates confusions and conflicts among them. The staff and the leadership admit that verbal communication creates a lot of confusion and misunderstanding. To quote the secretary, "Sometimes a staff would sit with the office secretary and decide something. Next time he will say something else."

Similarly, the *relationship* among the functionaries at different levels of hierarchy seems to be quite informal. Project co-ordinators and many of the supervisors reside together at different centres of the organisation. The vice-chairman, who resides at the centre with other personnel, is engaged in all sorts of activities like helping in cooking, cleaning the room, participating in the executive body meetings and recruitment of the staff. The atmosphere of the centre or the office is quite relaxed and the nature of interaction is open. However, it is also observed that whenever the secretary or the office secretary (or sometimes the founder chairman) visits the centre, everyone would become attentive and quite formal in their behaviour and interaction.

The *selection process* of the functionaries is also informal in nature. The leadership prefer experience, sincerity, and sensitivity towards social work for selecting the staff. A personal contact with the leadership is the primary mode of selection. In case of the project co-ordinators where the organisation recruits a qualified professional, mostly the personal contacts of the secretary or the founder chairman are used. If supervisor level workers are to be appointed, the organisation first advertises the posts in the villages through a known person or pamphlets. Sometimes they organise a two or three days camp (if they have received a large number of applications) to select the staff. According to the secretary, responsibility and accountability are the guiding factors for the recruitment. Self-discipline is emphasised by the leadership not only in relation to their delegated responsibilities but also with regard to their day-to-day activities and behaviour.

Although, there are formal forums for taking policy related and administrative

decisions, the actual *decision making process* in the organisation is highly centralised. Despite the claim of the leadership about a decentralised working strategy, one can observe that inadvertently the final decision on any issue would be taken by them. Even regarding trivial problems, the staff member would frequently approach the leadership. Sense of job insecurity associated with the temporary nature of the projects and the project-based appointments of the staff affect their motivation and commitment towards their assignments. There is no formal and systematic policy of promotion or incentives. The nature of decision on all such issues would be highly personalised and idiosyncratic. The policy-related decisions are taken formally in the annual executive body meetings. However, in actual practice, secretary takes independent decisions and informs the executive body later on. At the implementation level, the secretary was taking all decisions till 1994-95. After 1994-95, the project co-ordinators were allowed to take certain decisions regarding their respective projects. They are supposed to inform the secretary about such decisions. In reality, the project co-ordinators desist from taking even minor decisions related to their projects on their own. For example, in three separate meetings (in which I was present) between the founder chairman and the project co-ordinators from different areas, the former criticised the co-ordinators for their dependence on the leadership even for trivial things like shortage of stationaries, or contingency expenses. In another meeting, community level workers (CLWs) complained that the project in-charge of the safe-toilet construction programme had not started the work even after depositing the money for about three months. The in-charge, however, clarified that he would have to take permission from the secretary before initiating the work.

The leadership attributes such tendencies to the inherent deficiency in the personality of the project co-ordinators. The project co-ordinators on the other hand feel that it is better to do what the leadership expect or the project proposal demands. They fail to visualise any use or long-term sustainable impact of their extra efforts from the short-term projects of two to three years duration. This mind set strongly inhibits them from taking any bold and creative decisions, as they are not sure about the nature of the next project, its area of implementation etc. Also the varying strategies and decision making process followed in different projects further complicates the ambiguities. For example, the project co-ordinator of People's Plan Project has got sufficient space to incorporate certain decisions based on the need of the field or the

people. However, this is not the case in the project on reproductive health and child welfare supported by SIFPSA. It has got a rigid structure and does not allow any space to make need-based contextual adjustments.

The temporary nature of the projects and the project-based appointments of the staff affect their motivation and commitment towards the assignments. Sense of job insecurity invariably grapples the staff at all the levels of hierarchy. A majority of the staff members join the organisation basically for financial reasons. There is no formal and systematic policy of promotion or incentives. However, there are quite a few persons who have been giving their services to the organisation for a relatively longer duration and have been given financial incentives. For example, one of the staff had joined the organisation as a social worker and after five years he became a project co-ordinator. Similarly three grassroots workers who had joined at the bottom-most level of organisational hierarchy were promoted as supervisors.

The aforementioned ambiguities prevailing in the organisation with respect to the job descriptions, job delegation, working style, decision making process, roles and relationships, highlight the need for devising new ideas and tools for the internal governance of VDOs. These multidimensional complexities usually keep the functionaries in a state of dilemma and indecision.

3.7.3 Formal versus Informal Interaction

The lack of proper balance and co-ordination between the formal and informal organisational processes in VDOs is closely associated with the ambiguities involved in the interaction pattern among the functionaries.

Formal interaction here refers to the exchange of ideas and opinions taking place in a formal setting, like the weekly/fortnightly meetings of the staff with the leadership, in workshops or training programmes, etc. The focus in this kind of interaction remains on the project related issues. In such interactions, the importance of internalising moral values and ethical attitudes in voluntary work is frequently emphasised. Commitment, dedication, motivation, social and national cause, social justice, people's right, people's mobilisation, and people's empowerment are some of the catchwords used repeatedly in these interactions.

By informal interaction, we mean the casual exchange of ideas and discussions

carried out in informal settings, like during dinner, during morning/evening walk, or during leisure time. The staff members would interact more like friends rather than organisation personnel.

The content and the nature of dialogues and discussions in these two types of interactions reflect remarkable inconsistencies and contradictions. For example, while the former demands strict observance of the time schedule, the latter demands flexibility in terms of time and approach. During a formal meeting the super-ordinate would talk about the exigency of internalising high moral values and immediately; after the meeting he would exhibit totally contradictory behaviour. Table 3.7 presents some examples of such contradictions and inconsistencies.

When a co-ordinator level staff gets disenchanted with such contradictions, the comments like '*dhande matram*', 'minimum wages for CLWs/supervisors', 'grass without roots' become frequent. These contradictions and inconsistencies leave the grassroots workers in a dilemma. In the beginning, a supervisor or a CLW (who usually happens to be a local person) develops a strong emotional attachment with the work. They join the organisation (what they initially perceive as a private organisation) to do a job. However, slowly, they find the nature of work quite adventurous and interesting to them. To quote a supervisor,

Earlier I was unemployed and was looking for a job. However, when I started this work, I found some purpose behind it. It was more than merely a job. Although, even earlier I would have liked to do such work for the cause of our people, but then I did not have any idea about such work.

Voluntary work provides them a role and an opportunity to work for the upliftment and betterment of their own community. They get a distinct identity in their community. It motivates them to work for the cause of their community. However, this spirit of motivation and voluntarism receives a setback, when they start observing the aforementioned contradictions and inconsistencies. The consistent observations of such contradictions ultimately make them sceptical about the very notion of social work.

In this context, the community level workers (CLWs) have to struggle with another dilemma. The nature of verbal inputs they usually receive in formal meetings from the secretary, founder chairman and/or from some invited guests, appeal them not to take their responsibility as a job. However, in the weekly or fortnightly meetings with the concerned project co-ordinators, the way they are asked to focus upon the

Table 3.7: Formal versus Informal Interactions

FORMAL	INFORMAL
The meetings/programmes start with prayers and inspirational songs.	Criticising God, Gandhi etc. Using slang against Gandhi and Khadi. Listening, talking, and discussing about latest movies and film songs.
Emphasising sanctity in one's behaviour and actions.	Asking subordinates to prepare and bring tobacco, etc. Loose talks creating an impression among the subordinates that whatever the super-ordinates say in the formal meeting is just a formality and that he is in not a role model.
Talks against social exploitations and injustices. For example, minimum wage must be given to the labourers.	Exploitation and injustice within the organisation. For example, during the construction of the training centre in the organisations, the labourers were paid much less than the minimum wage. Comments like the community level workers (CLWs) work for just Rs. 10/- per day can easily be heard.
Shouting slogans like <i>Vande Matram</i> meaning that we pay respect to the motherland (through the type of service we engage in for the benefit of the society)	Using phrases like <i>Dhande Matram</i> (meaning that, whatever I am doing is just a job which I have undertaken as a means of livelihood).
Emphasising the implementation of need- based programme.	Accepting whatever project is available.
Emphasising the fact that to achieve the goal of the organisation, it must go beyond the rigid framework of project specific activities.	Accepting the fact that the project heavily work as a <i>khunta</i> (barrier) to address the need-based situational demands of the people.
Emphasis by the leadership that one should use presence of mind in the field area.	Subordinates (CLWs/supervisors) hesitate to do so, since some of them have got strong negative reactions in the past

project specific responsibilities, compel them to take their assignment as a job. Similarly, in their orientation camps they are usually informed in detail about the importance of tackling many important issues in the village. Table 3.8 presents some facts about the time spent on different issues in these camps.

It is to be noted that the supervisor level workers also invariably participated in these orientation camps. During a workshop they listed 43 issues related to individuals, family, society and the environment, which according to them were important to make a comprehensive analysis of the village situation, its needs and expectations. These

Table 3.8: Days Spent on Different Issues in the Orientation Camps

Duration*	Social evils	Health & Family Welfare	Govt. Policies/ Programmes	Bio-gas etc.	Organisational works	Mahila Mandals etc.	Total No. of Days
Oct. 91- March 92	1	11	1	7	0	1	21
April 92 - Sep. 92	1	4	2	3	1	2	13
Oct. 92 - March 93	0	4	1	3	1	4	13
April 93 - Sep. 93	1	6	0	0	1	4	12
Oct. 93 - March 94	1	9	2	1	3	5	21
April 94 - Sep. 94	0	7	1	1	0	4	13
April 96 - Sep. 96	1	6	1	0	2	1	11
Oct. 96 - March 97	0	5	0	0	3	5	13
Total No. of Days	5	52	8	15	11	26	117

* The number of days in the columns does only mean that the particular issue remained the focus issue of orientation and not the exclusive issue of orientation.

issues have been listed in Appendix X.

One can thus infer that the supervisors and the CLWs who are basically from the local region and are engaged in day-to-day formal and informal interactions with the people, develop a broad understanding about the village situation and its problems. They conceptualise their own means and strategy to solve them. However, when they go for their actual project-based work they find it extremely focussed and devoid of meeting many important and urgent needs and expectations of the people.

They are often told by the leadership that they are not paid employees of the organisation. They are paid some honorarium in recognition of their efforts made for a social cause. But the way they are asked to deposit the report and fulfil other project requirements strictly in time, make them believe that they are simply paid workers of a 'private organisation'. Sometimes their honorarium is deducted if they fail to discharge some responsibility, or to attend the work without giving any prior information to the co-ordinator. In the formal meetings, CLWs are addressed as '*behanji*' (elder sister). Incidentally, during my stay in the organisation, a CLW lost her husband due to snakebite. It was the fortnightly meeting day of CLWs. They all wanted to visit their fellow CLW's house to console her. However, they were not permitted. Later on, one

of the CLWs while talking to her fellow CLWs commented,

They (referring to the leadership and the other seniors) call us sister. Would they behave similarly if this accident had happened with their own sisters? Even then, they talk of Gandhiji and Vinobaji!

And then comes the whole lot of things which most of the staff members feel is ethically unjustified, viz., use of telephone calls and the official vehicles for personal use, using the office centre as a computer centre by the secretary's own kith and kin etc.

Sometimes, the project co-ordinators and the supervisors are even rebuked by the secretary or the office secretary for certain initiatives, where the former had actually anticipated appreciations and rewards. For example, once a project co-ordinator took up a seriously injured person to the hospital in the organisation's ambulance. The victim was declared dead, and police took the ambulance into their custody for an investigation. For this act, the concerned staff was taken to task by the leadership. Similarly, once a villager approached the centre for ambulance to carry his pregnant wife to the hospital. The supervisor immediately rushed to the office and asked the secretary about the ambulance. But he was refused and asked to make some excuse to the concerned villager. These occasional incidents are not only noticed by the contemporary staff but they also keep on trickling down to the newcomers, sooner or latter. Consequently, they prefer to stick to their routine work. The spirit of voluntarism and dedication to the work starts declining and their approach becomes mechanical. They become more like a one-dimensional organisational men. Once again, their action becomes a *job*.

This mechanism by which an enthusiastic entrant loses her/his motivation, acts as one of the biggest hurdles in the *karyakarta* (volunteers) building process. Once the colour of volunteerism fades, and the staff start taking their work responsibilities as a job, the feeling of insecurity naturally comes to them. Interestingly, this sense of insecurity is not limited only to the employed staff. Leadership too struggle with a sense of insecurity (as expressed many times in the interview). The secretary does not know at what point of time a worker would leave the organisation. The rate of turn over of the workers adversely affects the organisation in its goal achievement. Whenever a new person joins, he has to start from the beginning to understand the local dynamics, the people, the projects, and their colleagues. PANI has been facing

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this problem since its inception. The lack of volunteers (either full time or part time) makes the problem even worse. Out of about 10 villages where meetings were held, I could hardly find any volunteer. The leadership accept this deficiency and its adverse impact on creating and sustaining people's involvement and mobilisation through the organisational activities.

3.8 PANI versus People

3.8.1 The Interaction Process

The formal interaction of the functionaries with the people began through Dhirenbbhai Mother & Child Care Centre (DMCCC). The place where the centre is located is called *Gogowa*. Till date, many villagers identify the organisation as *Gogowa* hospital or simply a health centre. Direct interaction with the people in the project villages is maintained primarily through community level workers (CLWs). The CLWs are identified as *dai* (midwife) engaged in pregnancy related activities and distribution of some medicines.

The supervisor level staff, like the ANMs, the community organisers, the health workers, or the social workers make at the most one or two visits per month to each village. Visits to the remote villages are rare. For example, in the two of the most remote villages (situated at a distance of 13 Kms and 18 Kms respectively from the head-office of the organisation) on an average the supervisor level staff make five to six visits in a year⁴.

The interaction of the project co-ordinators with the target group is low and unplanned. There is no formal guidelines or policy on this. The frequency of visits to the field is solely decided by the concerned co-ordinators. Consequently it varies from project to project. The difference has become more prominent, particularly after the increase in number of projects of varying nature. Sudden increase in the number of projects and project areas demands frequent assistance from the project co-ordinator of one project in the activities of the other projects. For example, the RACHNA and the People's Plan projects have to conduct a large number of training programmes. These programmes consume most of the time of the majority of the project co-

⁴ These figures are based on the information from the personal diaries of the CLWs.

ordinators. They delegate their own project responsibilities to some subordinate. Consequently, their own contacts with the target group further declines. The overall pattern and frequency of interaction existing among the different collectivities of PANI is shown in figure 3.2. In this diagram, the smooth arrow shows the interaction between the executive secretary and the other collectivity. The shaded block arrows show the interaction between the professional and the other collectivities. And the dotted block arrows show the interaction between the supervisors and the other collectivities. Width of different arrows shows the frequency of interaction between two collectivities.

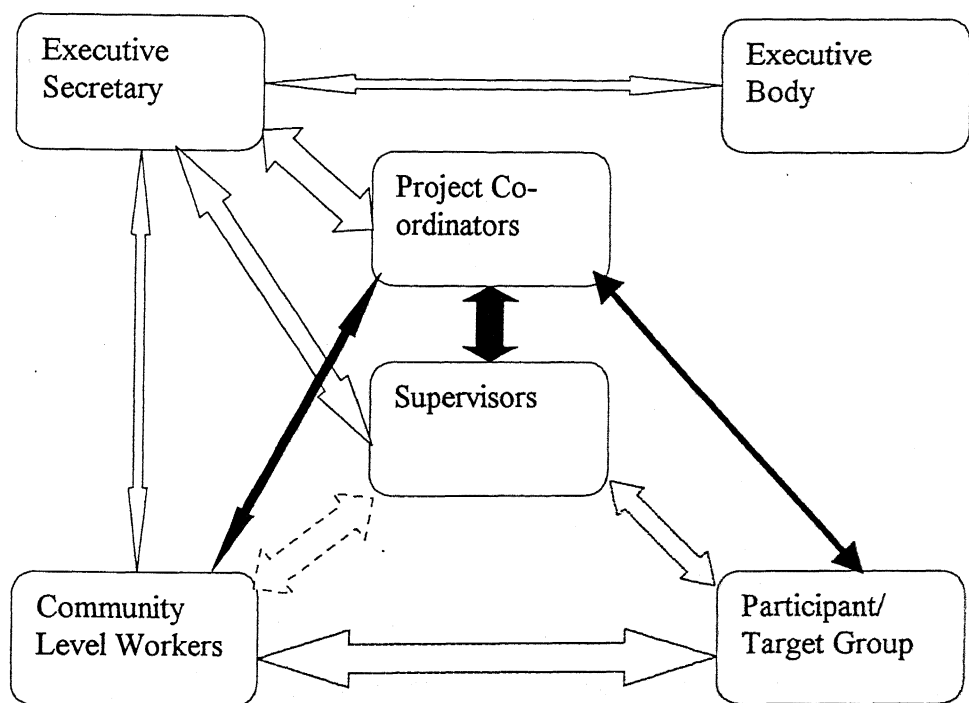


Fig. 3.2: Frequency of Interaction among Different Collectivities

The figure shows that the frequency of interaction is more between the subsequent level of organisational hierarchy. It starts declining as the distance between the organisational hierarchy increases. The interaction with the people is basically maintained by the community level workers (CLWs) and the supervisors. These interactions go beyond the project specific matters and invariably involve some individual or community problems. During the formal village meetings and training programmes involving the people, the organisational workers discuss a number of

issues beyond the project. Subsequently, the people also expect PANI to do something concrete to solve their other problems like roads, water, electricity, school etc. In one of the fortnightly meetings of the CLWs, when I probed about the three major problems in their villages; non-availability of kerosene, bungling and corruption by village *pradhans*, and consumption of excessive liquor were cited as the most common problems in majority of the villages.

The steps taken to solve these problems by the organisational staff are limited to discussions and suggestions. However, when the people fail to see any concrete action taken by the organisation on the problems, their interest and participation in the project activities declines.

In most of the village level meetings, the participation of the villagers remains limited to the members of the self help groups (SHGs). Hardly 10 to 12 women turn up for these meetings. Responding to the queries on their lack of participation in these meetings, most of the other village women said that it was difficult for them to find time for such activities, as they were already busy in their own work. They consider these meetings to be the work of PANI. Similarly, in the beginning, when there were village health committees, even the women from the upper class and caste used to participate. However, after the formation of the SHGs, they have slowly stopped coming to these meetings since they perceive SHGs are meant for the poor. In some villages, the village women complained that the organisational staff do not fulfil the assurances given to them. For example, once the villagers were assured that free milk powder and food grain would be provided that was never fulfilled.

Another, important aspect of the interaction with the target group is the notion of *facilitation*. The functionaries at different levels (except the CLWs) would repeatedly try to convince the people that their role is to facilitate the process of problem solving and not to solve the problem. However this facilitation has so far been limited to giving verbal suggestions to the people. It may be noted that in various meetings and training sessions, the founder chairman, secretary, and project co-ordinators would emphasise that the grassroots workers should educate and motivate the people to solve their other problems. But in the same formal meetings the CLWs are enquired and expected to report regularly about their project related progress, viz., how many cases they took up, how much medicine distributed, how many villages visited, etc. Consequently, the efforts of the CLWs are basically directed towards

fulfilling the project requirements and the non-project based problems and issues continue to remain untouched.

Besides these personal visits, the interaction with the people is also maintained through other activities like health education camps and issue based awareness campaigns on environment protection, AIDS, *Panchayati Raj*, etc. Table 3.9 shows the number of health education camps organised by the organisation. On an average 20 community members participated in each camp.

Table 3.9: Number of Awareness Camps

Period	No. of Camps
October 91-March 92	89
April 92-September 92	217
October 92-March 93	339
April 93-September 93	118
October 93-March 94	128
April 94-September 94	52

During these camps a wide range of topics were discussed. They included issues related to immunisation, STD/AIDS prevention, iodised salts, family planning, nutrition, environmental sanitation, mother and child health care, communicable and non-communicable diseases, alternative medicines, home remedies, homeopathic medicines, health insurance, community health and personal hygiene and government health services. Besides, issues like pest management, use of pesticides, small savings and credits social problems and legislation, literacy, non-conventional energy and national integration were also covered.

Similarly, in the regular meetings of the women's group at the village level the participants used to discuss the following issues regularly:

1. Alcoholism and drug addiction;
2. Health services and quacks;
3. *Panchayati Raj* Bill and role of women members;
4. Development schemes for the poor, women and weaker sections of the society;
5. Ecological health system and environmental sanitation, social forestry, kitchen

gardening;

6. Clean drinking water, resources and utilisation;
7. Women's fund and income generating schemes;
8. Women's problems, viz., dowry, wage rights, domestic violence, sexual abuse, and low status;
9. Non-conventional energy sources, viz., smokeless *chullahs* (ovens), bio-gas, solar cooker; and
10. Family planning.

On an average these meetings used to be held twice in a month. This means 24 meetings in a year and 192 meetings per village during the past eight years. Then there were intermittent meetings organised by the project co-ordinators or the supervisors or some outside visitors. The point is that during such a large number of formal interactions with the people, the information on the above topics was given and discussions were held repeatedly. However, except the routine work of the CLWs, the people have not seen any concrete action on these issues. When I probed the CLWs as to what exactly they do in the villages, most of them said that they give information on such and such issue or they advise them to keep the drinking water clean, or to maintain cleanliness in and around the house, etc. In the name of concrete activities they distribute medicines, conduct vaccination at the centre, collect funds for SHG, and check-up the pregnant women. This phenomenon of flow of information and actual action is summarised in Figure 3.3. In this diagram, the smooth lines show the information disseminated between the concerned collectivities. The dotted lines depict the actual action taken by the organisational staff.

Thus while, there has been so much of information dissemination on various issues, affecting the daily life of the target group, concrete action to solve problems has been lacking.

3.8.2 The Impact and Implications

The nature of interaction process which has been maintained by the organisational staff with the target group has left an impression that PANI is mere a hospital, engaged in some sort of welfare activities for the women and children belonging to the poorer and weaker sections of the community. The local elite like the

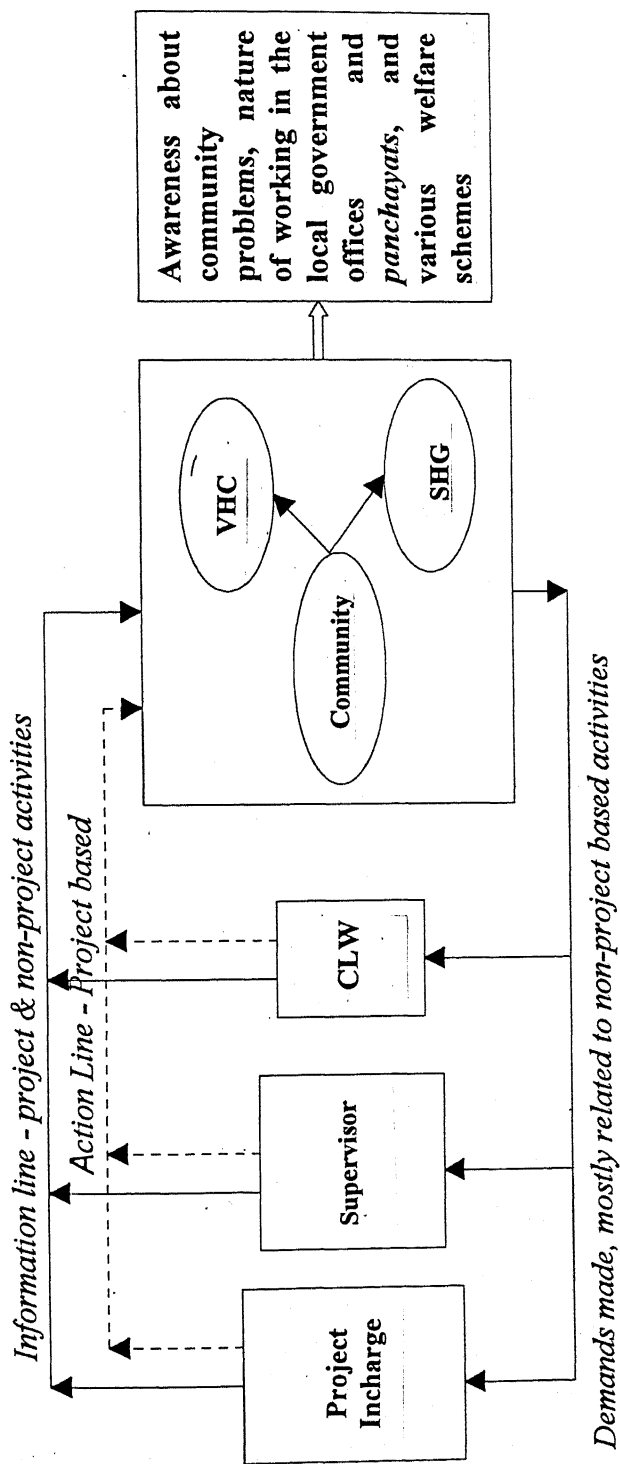


Fig. 3.3: Ambiguity of Interaction with the Target Group

teachers, the village *pradhans*, and the landlords comment that the leadership of PANI manage some funds from foreign countries, spend a part of it to run the centre and the rest of the funds remain unaccountable. A school teacher from the project village commented that 10 years ago, they (i.e., the leadership) used to move either on foot or on bicycle but now they move in cars. The people other than the target group members have little idea about the type of activities the PANI is engaged in. Even the organisation could never make a planned and conscious effort to involve them in the organisational activities.

One may, however, observe varying people's perception and understanding about the organisation in different project areas. For example, in the People's Plan area, people have started developing a better understanding about their own development and the organisation's role in that process. But in the ICHP this understanding is yet to be developed. Actually in ICHP and IHP project areas, the interaction of the organisation with the target group is maintained primarily through the CLWs. Intermittently a supervisor would pay a visit once or twice a month. CLWs during their visits, sit with a few SHG members, collect the monthly contribution of the group, enquire about any pregnant women (if any) of the area, distribute some medicines among women and children, and give suggestions regarding health and hygiene. Similarly supervisors during their visits usually hold meetings with the women and disseminate information. The information may be either project specific or may go beyond the projects touching upon the government or *panchayat* schemes, social evils etc. In none of the villages, the organisation was introduced to the villagers in an open village meeting. That was the reason that even after almost a decade of work in some villages the villagers do not know some of the basic facilities, which the organisation can provide. For example, in one of the ICHP village situated very near to the organisation head office, and rated highly by the leadership in terms of the impact of the organisation, I incidentally came across a patient. I was accompanied by the CLW of the village. The person was a daily wage earner. Although he had already spent a lot of money on treatment, he did not know that PANI, which was working in their village for such a long time (that too basically on health) provides medical insurance. It could have helped him immensely to support the cost of his treatment. Interestingly, his wife was a regular member of the village self help group (SHG). During a meeting in the same village when I enquired about the health insurance scheme (in which Rs. 30/ is

deposited annually for free treatment), only six people (two men, and four women) out of 45 (five men and forty women) knew about it.

This trend was observed in all the villages. Quite a good number of villagers (especially the men from the upper class) with whom I interacted during my stay in about twenty villages, were almost ignorant about the aims of the organisation, its activities, etc. The usual explanation given for this by the organisational staff was that the compulsions of the project responsibilities did not allow them to spend enough time to do such groundwork. At the same time, they also accepted that such steps were important to ensure the participation of the villagers. Ironically throughout the project duration, people think that the activities initiated by the organisation is PANI's work. They do not perceive the activities as serving their own cause. The supervisors and the CLWs also complain about disinterest shown by the villagers in the meetings. According to them, the villagers usually look for personal monetary benefits. Even if a few villagers do accept the benefits of the activities and volunteer themselves to co-operate in organisational activities, it does not make much impact on others. Thus, although they have been talking continuously about the need for community participation, the actual involvement is largely lacking.

The approach of focussing the activities strictly to the project specifications has some positive impacts also. People cite the growth in the rate of immunisation in the project villages and decline in the *purdha* system as the positive impacts of the work initiated by PANI. They feel that women have become more vocal as compared to 10 years before. Both women and men from the community accept this. When CLWs were asked to tell about the positive impacts of their efforts in the villages, the following responses came:

- Improvement in the rate of vaccination of infants and the pregnant women
- Improved articulation among the village women and greater sharing of ideas
- Decline in child marriage
- Improvement in education, especially in girls education
- Improvement in saving
- Decline in *purdha* (veil) system
- Improved immunisation
- Safer delivery,
- More ante-natal check-ups,
- Encouraging response to the women's fund.

When the participant women were asked as to what do they gain from the

fortnightly/monthly/casual meetings conducted by the staff of PANI, they answered that this has led to greater awareness and information on community health and hygiene. However, in all the villages I observed acute unhygienic condition around the drinking water tap and in and around the streets and their houses. When I pointed out towards this inconsistency, the village women cited their preoccupation with the family and farm activities, and lack of co-operation from the other villagers. A typical response is, "Nobody comes for the community. Everybody worries about one's own self." Even the organisational staff, like the CLWs, the supervisors, and the project coordinators, have never made any efforts to involve the people in this process. However, the secretary analysed this from a different perspective. According to him,

People don't participate in such activities since they do not realise the long-term benefits from the projects. They always want some immediate personal benefits, viz., loans, or house, or other inputs through which they can start some income generation activities. Consequently they do not translate the suggestions and ideas given by us into concrete actions.

So far, nowhere in the field, the organisational staff involved themselves with the community and undertook any collective exercise with them. In this regard, some old villagers still remember the work done by one of the pioneer Gandhians, Late Sri Dhirenbai, even after sixty years. They still remember how he used to clean the sewage or the well on his own and then how the villagers would gather around him and assist him. At night, after dinner he would regularly pay visits to some villages and hold meetings and discussions about the village affairs. The same old villagers could not tell as to what PANI had been doing in their village for the last seven or eight years.

The latest initiative taken by the organisation to form self-help groups and create women's fund has helped some poor members to take loan from the group in cases of emergency. Although the organisation has been discussing about initiating some income generating activities either at the individual level or at the group level, so far nothing could start. Many of the SHG members are sceptical about their own capability to start some income generating activity and repay the loans. Some of them are doubtful about the feasibility of undertaking any group activity. The organisation has so far been unable to come up with any clear-cut guidelines and strategies on these issues.

3.9 CONCLUSION

The emergence of PANI in the voluntary development sector owes to both, the voluntaristic and the structural factors. The founder members of PANI conceptualised PANI as an agent of empowerment of rural poor, particularly of rural women. To achieve this goal, they perceived the 'people' as the key element to be taken into account. However, despite their clear visualisation of the centrality of the *people's role* in the mission, the people were not involved in the process of conceptualising the identity of the organisation. The leadership and the organisational staff hardly conducted any open meetings in any of its project villages to explain the nature and purpose of the organisation. The objectives of various projects on the action plane could not be linked properly with the aims and ideals of PANI on the conceptual plane.

The project-based mode of intervention did not provide adequate space to address the emerging needs and situational uncertainties emerging at the field level. The huge diversity in the nature of various projects undertaken by PANI lacked consistency and direction. These inconsistencies can be observed in all the four phases, through which PANI has grown. They are, the phase of conceptualisation, the phase of ice-breaking, the phase of formalisation and the phase of expansion.

It was observed that in the project of similar nature, different approaches were adopted. The varying ideologies of the donors coupled with the personality traits of the concerned project co-ordinator were primarily responsible for these variations. These variations often created confusions among the staff, particularly among the grassroots workers. Similar ambiguities and inconsistencies were also visible in the haphazard selection of the project villages. Thus, in some area it preferred an intensive approach, while in other areas it went for an extensive coverage of the area without properly assessing its capacity. It should be noted that it was not done as part of a strategy. The preoccupation of the leadership with the sustenance and security concerns of the organisation was primarily responsible for this incoherent expansion of the field area. The contact of the leadership with field was minimal. It was engaged more in building the organisational capacity through external meetings, networking and other administrative work. It did not initiate any effort to ensure people's involvement in the process of building organisational capacity. Overall, this approach adversely affected the interest and involvement of the target population in the organisational activities.

Over the years, the efforts of the leadership have brought more and more projects. The organisation slowly acquired a formal hierarchical structure to manage and co-ordinate its activities. This formal structure brought formal roles and responsibilities. However, simultaneously the informal ways of assigning the work by the leadership also remained prevalent. This again led to dilemmas and ambiguities about one's roles and responsibilities. Similarly, although the leadership claimed that the organisation followed a formal and decentralised decision-making process, the nature of final decision on any issue would be personal and random in nature. The contradictory nature of dialogues and discussions in the formal and the informal interactions generated confusions among the staff. The professional project co-ordinators' preference to confine their actions within the boundaries of the project specifications, while the grassroots workers' preference to orient their actions according to the emerging needs and priorities of the people generated conflicts. This associated with the time-bound nature of the projects and the project-based appointment of the staff adversely affected their motivation and commitment towards the assignments. The preoccupation of the staff in fulfilling their project-bound organisational roles, eventually make their approach mechanical and devoid of the voluntary spirit. Contradictions between the images of their perceived roles and the actual roles held by professionals and grassroots workers obstruct the building of a team of motivated persons with long term commitment to this field of voluntary action.

The higher level staff would leave the organisation as soon as they get some better options. Consequently, the organisation has to manage its activities with the help of a floating group of staff. These random organisational processes, which are neither formal nor informal, obstruct the development of commitment and motivation among the staff. The workers slowly start perceiving the VDO like any other private organisation, primarily fulfilling the requirements of the leadership.

On the people's front, it developed an image of a hospital/health centre because of its focus on health related projects. Project-based identity of the organisation, however, cannot be sustained. The organisation failed to project itself as an agent of empowerment or emancipation of the people, as conceptualised by it in the beginning. Its impact on roles, relationships and institutions at the grassroots levels in general was specific to the achievements of the short-term objectives of the projects. Although the professional approach adopted by the organisation helped them to achieve their project

targets in time, but in this process, eventually the original vision of people's empowerment and social change do not appear to be addressed adequately from the people's perspective.

Chapter 4

DISHA SOCIAL ORGANISATION: A CASE OF PROCESS ORIENTED VDO

This chapter presents a comprehensive discussion on Disha Social Organisation (DISHA), which can be categorised as a process oriented voluntary development organisation (VDO). It begins with a brief description of the area of operation and the people with whom the organisation is primarily interacting since its inception. The chapter aims at examining the process of emergence of the organisation and developing a comprehensive profile of the project and non-project based activities implemented by it. It is followed by an analysis of the mode of intervention in the field. The chapter also examines the nature of interaction among diverse collectivities during the process of organisation's structural development and capacity building. Finally, the impact and implications of the interactions on different collectivities are discussed.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

DISHA was established in 1984 as a *Society*, under the Society Registration Act, 1860 of India. It began its work from Sarsawa and Sadholi Quadim development blocks of Saharanpur district. In 1992, it spread its activities to seven earthquake-hit villages situated in Dunda development block of Uttarkashi district. In 1996, it further expanded its work among a group of *ringal* artisans in Tehri Garhwal district. The head-office of the organisation is located in Sultanpur town of Saharanpur district. It has separate field offices in Uttarkashi and Tehri Garhwal districts, from where a team of four members co-ordinates the activities.

4.2 THE AREA AND THE PEOPLE

The present study has focused upon the activities implemented in the two development blocks of Saharanpur district, where DISHA has remained active for the

past 14 years. The core-group members of DISHA, including the leadership, still utilise most of their time, efforts and resources in these two blocks. The following section presents a brief profile of these two blocks. The details have been compiled from various reports and documents collected from the head-office of the organisation.

4.2.1 Sarsawa Block

Sarsawa block has 154 populated villages. According to 1991 census, the population of the block is 1,61,669, of which 54.1% are males and 45.9% are females. Around 26.7% (43,182) of the population consists of the Scheduled Castes. Muslims constitute about 40% of the total population. The literacy rate among men is 45.21% and among women is 19.10%. Overall literacy rate is 33.38%. The literacy rate among Scheduled Castes could not be computed due to non-availability of data. However, according to the key informants and the secretary of the organisation the proportion of the literates among Scheduled Castes in this block is very low.

The block falls under the *khadar* (i.e. the plane) area of the district. Here, only one crop can be raised in a year. Most of the land is owned by the upper caste people. The backward Muslims and the Scheduled Castes are mostly landless and they constitute the majority of the labour force.

4.2.2 Sadholi Qadim Block

Sadholi Qadim block is situated at the foothills of the Shivalik mountain range. It has 127 villages. According to 1991 census, the total population of the block is 1,25,968 of which 54.1% are males and 45.9% are females. The population of the Scheduled Castes is 24.6%. In this block also, Muslims constitute about 40% of the total population. The literacy rate among men is 30.85% and among women is 11.51%. The overall literacy rate is 22.13%. As in the case of Sarsawa block, the proportion of the literates among the Schedules Castes is very low.

The block falls under the *ghar* (i.e., water deficient) area at the foothills of the Shivalik mountain range. The irrigation facilities are poor. Because of this, here also in a year only one crop can be raised.

4.3 THE EMERGENCE OF DISHA

Before the formation of DISHA, a Delhi based voluntary organisation called Centre for Development of Instructional Technology (CENDIT) was active in and around Sultanpur town. CENDIT was involved in the production of documentaries and other educational material. Its primary objective was to create awareness and disseminate information on community health and family welfare through street-plays, folk-shows, video-shows, etc. It also used to provide primary health services in and around Sultanpur. In 1982, CENDIT required a person to take charge of its Sultanpur unit. It contacted the Nehru Yuva Kendra (NYK) of the neighbouring Dehradun district, and sought some volunteers to co-ordinate its activities in the area. Subsequently in 1982, Mr. Tewari and Ms. Manorama from NYK Dehradun joined CENDIT as volunteers. They were working as National Service Volunteers (NSVs) in Dehradun unit of NYK. Mr. Tewari had earlier worked for the freedom and rehabilitation of bonded labourers from Jansaur Babbar tribes in Chakrata sub-division of Dehradun district. He had organised youth clubs in 30 villages and had worked in the field of adult education.

From 1982 to 1984, along with their work in CENDIT Mr. Tewari and Ms. Manorma extensively visited the villages surrounding Sultanpur town. They closely observed and analysed numerous crises and contradictions prevailing at the grassroots level. During this period, they also faced procedural limitations in implementing the need-based activities through CENDIT. For example,

1. There were many procedural and administrative constraints because of CENDIT being a Delhi based organisation far away from Sultanpur.
2. Health and communication as the means of bringing social transformation had limited impacts.
3. The work on health related issues exposed the poor conditions of women in that area, particularly of those belonging to the deprived sections of society, like the Schedule Castes and the backward Muslims. Girls were considered a liability. A son was fed well and a girl was neglected. Girls were married at an early age of 12 to 14 years. *Purdah* (veil) system was common. Women were the frequent victims of family related violence. Their interaction with the outside world was strictly limited and controlled by men. It was reported that once when some

government agency wanted to appoint community health workers in the block, they could find only four women from the entire block, that too from the upper castes.

Consequently, Mr. Tewari and Ms. Manorama felt the need for undertaking a more comprehensive and intensive approach. Their two-year stint in CENDIT as volunteers provided them a first hand experience of the poor conditions of the oppressed masses, viz., the landless labourers, the poor artisans and the small farmers. They held discussions with the leadership of CENDIT on these issues.

Finally, it was decided that CENDIT would withdraw itself from the area and a new VDO would be established in its place. Thus, DISHA emerged in the voluntary development sector. Mr. Tewari became the first executive secretary and Ms. Manorama the first treasurer of the organisation¹. The chairman of CENDIT became the first chairman of DISHA. He offered his ancestral building for carrying out the official work of DISHA. The other local volunteers associated with CENDIT continued to work with DISHA, under the leadership of Mr. Tewari.

The organisation set a number of objectives as mentioned in the Memorandum of Association (MoA). They are listed in Appendix XI. These objectives aim to initiate a wide range of activities to strengthen the social, economic and political capacity of the people (more specifically the target group). The principle goal of DISHA according to the secretary is,

To mobilise people, mainly deprived and downtrodden, to form their sustainable organisations so as to achieve their all round development... social, economic and political, and empower the powerless with special emphasis on women.

The broad strategies developed to achieve this goal, as stated by the secretary and supported by the official reports of the organisation, were to *mobilise* and *organise* people to fight for their rights, to *educate* people about the ways of improving their living standards, and to *create and sustain* community organisations.

During the process of conceptualising the identity of the organisation and setting a direction for it, a few members of the founder executive body were involved besides the secretary and the treasurer. The participation of local people in this process

¹ Mr. Tewari continues to be the executive secretary of the organisation, while Ms. Manorma left DISHA in 1995 due to personal reasons.

was limited to the two local villagers who were also the members of the first executive body. The efforts to ensure people's involvement were emphasised only in the next phase of intervention.

4.4 THE INTERVENTIONS

DISHA began its intervention in the field through small training programmes on income generation. The decision to start with these programmes was based on the assessment of the leadership that without addressing economic problems of the target group, no meaningful impact can be made on health (the area in which CENDIT had been working till then). Two training programmes were organised in 1984, under the scheme of Training of Rural Youths for Self Employment (TRYSEM) started by the Government of India. The first training programme was held for a group of weavers from village Pathed and the second programme was meant for a group of women from village Ferozabad. In the same year, loans were arranged for a few women of Ferozabad to purchase buffaloes under the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) of government of India. Since then, DISHA has implemented a number of project and non-project based activities of diverse nature. They are briefly described below.

1. The Health Programme (1984 to 1994)

The health programme initiated by DISHA aimed at imparting health-education on communicable and non-communicable diseases, immunisation of children and mothers, and providing information on hygiene, clean drinking water, nutrition, etc. The emphasis was on mother and child health care. The programme was implemented simultaneously at two levels. First, DISHA opened a health clinic and started working in co-operation with the local state health agency. In the very first year it donated a piece of land to the state health department for building a Primary Health Centre (PHC) in Sultanpur. It allowed the auxiliary nurse and midwives (ANMs) from the PHC to use the facilities available in its clinic. The organisation appointed a trained ANM and a doctor. A T.B. diagnosis laboratory was also established. This programme was implemented in collaboration with the district T.B. hospital. From 1990, the clinic also started functioning as an immunisation centre.

Second, the organisation spread its activities into neighbouring villages in 1990. It selected one woman each from nine villages and trained them as health workers. These workers used to treat common seasonal diseases, generate awareness on health-related issues, and attend child-delivery cases. They also carried out awareness campaigns on preventive health care, use of local herbal plants for treatment, and proper sanitation. They educated women on nutrition. The focus of their work was on children and pregnant mothers. They encouraged the villagers to visit the PHC in case of any sickness and often accompanied them to the PHC. From 1990, the organisation started adopting four villages every year for immunisation. In 1993-94, six health-camps were organised for the villagers. During 1994-95, although the funding agency (OXFAM) discontinued its support to the programme, DISHA continued the programme on its own. However, soon the doctor and the ANMs left the organisation. From 1995-96, the health programme has been limited to the organisation of annual occasions like, pulse-polio programme, etc.

2. Income Generation Programme (1984 to 1991)

DISHA implemented a few small income-generating projects at different points of time. These projects aimed at equipping the women with some skill to increase their income generating capabilities. They are as follows:

1. The weavers project at village Pathed from 1984-86.
2. The stitching project at village Ferozabad in 1985.
3. The knitting project at Sultanpur in 1986.
4. The electronic training project for women at Sultanpur in 1991 with the help of the public undertaking enterprise of Uttar Pradesh government (namely UPTRON) and Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC).

However, once the funding was stopped, none of these projects could be sustained by the organisation. No post-training monitoring and support activities were carried out. During the field visits, I could not find any beneficiary of these projects, successfully utilising the training inputs for economic benefits.

3. The Education Programme (1984 onwards)

In 1984, DISHA introduced basic literacy programme at Sultanpur for the girls

in the age group of 14 to 18 years. In all, 25 girls were benefited in the first year. In 1989, five more adult education centres were opened for women. Three years later, in 1992, a *Sampurna Saksharta Jatha* (total literacy campaign) was organised in Sarsawa and Sadholi Qadim blocks as part of the Total Literacy Programme initiated by the government. In the same year, DISHA opened 15 education centres. These centres were started as alternative non-formal education centres catering to the needs of the girl child from poor families. However, at the time of this study only 9 centres were running. Approximately 20 women were enrolled in each centre. In these centres women are educated upto class VIII. Despite problems in running these centres and ensuring people's participation, the programme has served as another means for entering into the community and working with them. Greater emphasis has been laid on women's literacy, especially among Muslims, as schools are socially inaccessible to girls, particularly those belonging to the lower caste and Muslim minority. Special emphasis has been laid on promoting the functional literacy among Muslim women.

4. Organising Women (1984 onwards)

DISHA has used a combination of project-based and non-project-based activities to achieve the goal of *empowering the powerless*. The programme's special thrust is on organising the downtrodden, labourers and working women from the rural areas. In 1987, women's awareness groups called *Mahila Jagriti Samitis* (MJS) were formed in six villages, namely, Sultanpur, Pathed, Panchkuan, Danatpur, Ferozabad and Kheda Mewat. MJS aimed at strengthening women's movement for raising their social status. MJS president was called *sathin* (i.e., colleague) and was elected from amongst the members. The *MJS* used to meet once a month and run women's education centre. The members of *MJS* collected one rupee a month. The money thus collected was used for community work and to lend small loans (in cases of emergency). Some of the members took training for constructing smokeless *chulhas* (ovens). The *MJS* purchased utensils which were lent out at times of family celebrations and community get-togethers. In 1995, the MJSs were converted into self help groups (SHGs).

In 1989, DISHA launched another project, called *Mahila Samakhya*. Its basic objective was women's organisation and empowerment. It was implemented in 53

villages. This programme was funded and supported by Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India. Under this programme, a village level worker called *sakhi* (women's friend) was appointed in each village. They were paid a monthly honorarium. For every ten villages, there was a woman co-ordinator called *sahyogini* (women's colleague). The programme aimed at making the women aware of their rights and enable them to organise themselves to take action in securing their rights. The village level forums for the women, called *sangha* were formed to bring women together. In 1989, women under the aegis of DISHA led the struggle for equal wages. The agricultural wage issue gathered momentum. The labourers in the area had been denied the minimum wage and women were paid about half the men's wage. In this process, DISHA organised a conference of women, labourers and small peasants on December 27, 1989 to give impetus to the struggle oriented activities. This led to the formation of a community-based association called *Mahila, Mazdoor evam Laghu Kisan Morcha* (MMLKM). It passed a 19-point charter of demands. The *Morcha* worked as a frontal organisation to carry forward the struggle for equal wages to men and women agriculture workers. For over three months, they did not allow any person to work in the fields. At last, the landlords increased wages of the female labourers. Around the same time an anti-liquor agitation was launched in the village Pathed. The agitation led to the closure of the village liquor shop after a long struggle.

Mahila Samakhya programme was, however, abandoned in 1994 after the financial support to the programme was withdrawn by the supporting agency. Since 1995, the programme on women's empowerment has been continuing with the support from another funding agency, called MISEREOR. The self help groups (SHGs) constituted the major component of this project. In 1997, there were 65 active SHGs. Except for three SHGs, all the others were exclusively the women's SHGs. The number of members in SHGs varies from 10 to 20. They make a monthly contribution of Rs. 10 to 20. So far, a sum of about Rs. 4 lakhs has been deposited in these SHGs. Financial exchange is taking place in most of the groups. For each 10 SHGs there is a co-ordinator. The overall programme is co-ordinated by the project in-charge.

5. Baan (Rope) Workers' Programme (1984 onwards)

DISHA has been working amongst *baan* workers since its inception. *Baan* is

the rope made from a grass that grows in Shivalik forest area and commonly known as *bhabbhar*. Thousands of families from the *ghar* area in Sadholi Qadim block depend on *bhabbhar* and other minor forest produce for their livelihood. With commercialisation of the forest department activities, the *baan* workers started facing problems in getting *bhabbhar*. In 1984, DISHA first took up this issue in village Khera Mewat. It organised a co-operative of *baan* workers in the village. With the help of DISHA, the co-operative mobilised and procured a loan of Rs 26,000/- from the government under IRDP scheme. The *baan* workers purchased *bhabbhar* grass in bulk directly from the forest department. However, non-cooperative attitude of the Forest Corporation and delay in timely provision of the grass, often generated conflicts. To resolve this issue, DISHA organised the *baan* workers from the villages of Sadholi Qadim development block and formed a people's front, called *Ghar Kshetra Mazdoor Morcha* (GKMM). It gradually mobilised the *baan* workers in about 20 villages through this *Morcha*. At the beginning of every season, the *Morcha* raises issues like timely availability of the *bhabbhar* grass, appropriate quality and right price. They confront the forest department, the Forest Corporation, and the district administration on these issues. So far their problems are solved partly and temporarily.

6. Communication Group (1984 onwards)

DISHA formed a communication team to mobilise and educate the people in its field area. The team presents street-plays and organises puppet shows on social issues like indebtedness, dowry, minimum wage, communalism, *baan* workers' problems, etc. The communication team mobilises support for different projects and programmes. The team, however, lacks full time workers. The workers from other projects of the organisation and a few local volunteers help in organising its performance.

7. Vikas Volunteer Vahini (VVV) Programme (1985- 1995)

The Vikas Volunteer Vahini (VVV) programme was launched in 1985 with the co-operation of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural development (NABARD). It was started in a cluster of 5 villages, namely, Pathed, Dhaulahedi, Danatpur, Ferozabad and Khera Mewat. *Vikas Mandals* (developmental Groups) were formed including the farmers who were not defaulters. Workshops and training programmes were organised

for *Vikas Mandal* members. Farmers' fete, exhibition on animals, and regular recovery camps were other important components of this programme. In 1988-89, women's clubs were formed in village Sultanpur and Panchkuan.

The main objective of the programme was to educate the people for 'development through credit'. It emphasised on regular and timely repayment of loans so as to recycle the credit. During 1986-87, the organisation recovered Rs. 14,000 from the chronic defaulters through recovery camps.

8. Legal Aid (1984 onwards)

Since its inception, DISHA has been providing counselling and relief to the women victims of family violence. According to a study conducted by the organisation in 1994, DISHA workers had handled about 230 cases related to violence of all sorts, including rapes and dowry deaths. A detailed account of 167 cases may be categorised according to the types of issue as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Cases of Disputes Solved by DISHA through Legal Aid

S.No.	Cases	Number
1	Family disputes and domestic violence	82
2	Wage issue	25
3	Eve-teasing	12
4	Water/electricity	11
5	Rape	9
6	Alcoholism	7
7	Ration cards	6
8	Dowry	6
9	Land <i>pattas</i>	5
10	<i>Baan</i>	2
11	Old age pension	2
Total		167

Source: Shachindra (u.a.) *DISHA SOCIAL ORGANISATION: An Eventful Decade*

Table 4.1 shows that the maximum numbers of cases handled by DISHA are related to some form of family disputes and domestic violence. These cases almost invariably involved atrocities against women. A large number of these cases came from the Muslim community. The organisation tries to resolve most of these cases through counselling. Apart from this, the target group has also been helped in securing electricity, old age pension and ration cards.

9. Labour Education Camps (1985 to 1989)

DISHA organised a number of labour education camps with the help of National Labour Institute. These camps aimed at creating awareness among wage earners on minimum wages, equal wages for men and women workers, and other related issues of concern to them. In 1985, a camp was organised by the Central Board for Workers' Education. Forty *baan* workers participated in the camp. In the following year, a five-day camp was organised for women workers. In 1987, selection and training camps were organised for rural motivators. The agricultural and *baan* workers were benefited from these camps. The camp approach to motivate and educate the workers continued till 1988-89.

10. Hills Programme (1992 onwards)

In October 1991, the Uttarkashi district of U.P. was badly affected by an earthquake. The Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) approached DISHA to undertake shelter-construction work in the earthquake affected area. DISHA completed the construction of five such shelters. In 1996, the organisation designed a watershed conservation and development project for its field area. A three-member team conducted preliminary survey of the villages and mobilised people through camps and meetings. In the same year, it started a small project for *ringal* artisans in Tehri Garhwal district. Village meetings were organised in seven villages. The organisation provided a sum of Rs. 10,000 to the artisans as revolving fund. A *ringal* artisan group was constituted to co-ordinate the activities. A four-member team co-ordinates all the activities started under the hill programmes.

11. Panchayati Raj and Land Reforms (1996 onwards)

Panchayati raj programme conducts training programmes for elected *panchayat* members. The objective is to make them aware of their rights and duties as the members of the *panchayats*. A team of three programme staff is co-ordinating the *panchayati raj* and land reforms project.

The land reform is aimed at redistributing the surplus agricultural land among the landless people with the help of state agencies. The in-charge of the programme conducted surveys in the villages to ascertain the number of the landless people. The organisation pursued the district administration to take appropriate action towards land reforms. About 10 landless people have been given some agricultural land on lease after the efforts made by DISHA.

12. Training and Strengthening of VDOs (1996 onwards)

To share its experiences in developmental field with other smaller grassroots VDOs in the region, DISHA organises regular training programmes. The organisation also provides other technical, logistic, and networking supports to strengthen these VDOs. In 1997, it was working closely with three VDOs and two social activists. Two programme staffs and one support staff handle this project.

A comprehensive profile of the organisational activities till date is presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Project Profile of DISHA (1984-1997)

[illegible]

In summary, during 1984-89, DISHA concentrated its intervention in a few selected villages. This phase may be called *the phase of ice-breaking*. Each selected village had some active volunteers who were associated with the organisational activities. Initially the organisation took up short duration projects like conducting training programmes for a group of individuals and organising workshops and campaigns on various issues. The intervention through health, education and income generating programmes not only provided services to the people but also helped in establishing contacts and building rapport with them.

In 1989, DISHA received the first major project, called *Mahila Samakhya*. From 1989 onwards, *the phase of formalisation* started. The project helped the organisation to expand its activities to 53 villages of Sarsawa development block. The project aimed at building confidence and empowering the women. It helped in creating a strong and dedicated group of village level women workers (*sakhi*) in all the 53 villages. It also developed a motivated team of full time worker-cum-volunteers for the organisation. The programme continued till 1994. During the five-year period from 1989 to 1994, the organisation formed women's groups in each village. It also formed two community-based associations namely the MMLKM and the GKMM. Under the banner of these people's associations, DISHA launched the movement of equal wages for men and women agricultural workers, anti-liquor campaign and the movement for rights of the *baan* workers over the forest grass. After the discontinuation of *Mahila Samakhya* programme, another programme on women called 'women's empowerment programme' was started in 1995. In this programme, women's self help groups (SHGs) were formed in all the 53 villages. The programme continues till date. Along with this, during the past few years the organisation has also initiated some efforts to involve the men folk through systematic project-based activities. For example, the programmes on 'dialogue with men', *panchayati raj* and land issues have involved men, particularly from the poor community.

From 1992, the phase of expansion started and the organisation started expanding its area of work into the neighbouring districts. The organisation took up relief and welfare activities into the neighbouring hilly district of Uttarkashi. In 1996, it initiated an employment-oriented project for a group of *ringal* artisans in Tehri Garhwal district.

Since its inception, a majority of the programmes undertaken by DISHA has focussed on women, particularly on women from the backward and *dalit* castes. A wide variety of projects and programmes, meant exclusively for women have been implemented. Table 4.3 presents a detailed profile of these activities.

Table 4.3: Profile of the Women's Programme

Programme	84-85	85-86	86-87	87-88	88-89	89-90	90-91	91-92	92-93	93-94	94-95	95-96	96-97
Adult education	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Training On Tailoring	✓	✓								✓			✓
<i>Mahila Jagriti Samiti</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
<i>Mahila Samakhya</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Electronics Programme								✓	✓	✓			
<i>MMLKM</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Anti-Liquor Drive								✓	✓	✓			
Individual Cases	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Self Help Group												✓	✓

Apart from these activities, health programmes, regular workshops, training programmes, and awareness campaigns have also regularly involved the women.

4.5 MODE OF INTERVENTION

The mode of intervention during the initial years was primarily guided by the stated objectives of DISHA. The prioritised needs of the people guided its strategy. However, with the increase in number of projects, mode of intervention was increasingly influenced by the requirements of the project, the resource base of the organisation, the context, and its own sustenance concerns. The resource dependence on the external funding agencies adversely affected the efforts to follow a consistent mode of intervention. The donors' preferences for the area of work and target groups varied in different projects. It diffused the intensity of efforts and the basic strategies of the organisation were subdued. New ambiguities cropped up. The roles of functionaries became more ambiguous with the increasing number of projects. This section will address to the emerging complexities and dilemmas due to increasing

emphasis on formal, time bound, project-based activities along with non-project based activities.

4.5.1 Initiating the Intervention

It may be noted that the interventions initiated by the leadership during the first few years were preceded by extensive survey of the area. In the beginning, the secretary and the treasurer found it extremely difficult to interact with the village women due to the *purdha* (veil) system. Subsequently, they decided to strategically use various projects and programmes as means to enter the field and establish rapport with the target group. The initial projects focussed on the women from backward Muslim and weaver community. For example, in village Ferozabad, during the preliminary visits and discussions with the Muslim women, the women demanded a training programme on tailoring. The programme brought the otherwise shy women on a platform where they could interact with each other. Similarly in Pathed, DISHA started a training programme for weavers to upgrade their skills. In case of *baan* workers, the secretary initiated a dialogue with them while they used to pass through organisation's office on market days to sell the *baan* rope. After a regular and prolonged discussion with these workers, the organisation decided to enter their village. Thus, in the beginning, DISHA did not enter a village with ready-made projects or programmes. The activities undertaken in the villages were the outcome of the dialogues with the concerned target groups.

The implementation process in the beginning was associated with a close interaction between the leadership, the volunteers and the people. They held rounds of meetings, and frequently visited banks and other concerned offices with the people. The efforts that had to be made in order to secure the provisions from the government imparted many lessons to them. For example, the delay in sanctioning the loans to weavers for purchasing looms was so long that the trainees forgot the skills acquired through the training programmes. In case of tailoring training programme, serious marketing problems arose. The secretary himself was involved in selling the stitched clothes in the local markets. The *baan* workers had decided to construct a godown to store the grass. However, the leadership had to struggle a lot in order to get the loan sanctioned from the bank for this purpose. Thus the close interaction of the leadership

with the people helped in better understanding the local problems and building rapport with them.

The eventual focus on community *mobilisation* was the outcome of a series of initial experiences, through which the leadership, the volunteers, and the people went through. This process of organisational growth had a solid commitment to organise and motivate the poor, particularly the women to struggle for a better future. Recalling the initial days, the secretary's wife (she has been actively associated with the organisational activities from the beginning) said,

In the beginning, we used to interact with the people at personal level discussing about their individual and family problems. Women freely shared their problems, which they would not discuss even with their husbands. They often cried and wept openly. Slowly they started enquiring about us, our organisation, its purpose, etc. We started conducting monthly meetings. We introduced them to various welfare and developmental schemes of the government and assisted them in availing the benefits of these schemes. We formed their groups and initiated discussions in groups.

Slowly, the women started approaching the organisational staff with their personal problems, e.g., health problems, family violence, etc. The leadership gave due importance to these individual problems. It organised medical camps and helped in resolving disputes. This strengthened their self confidence. They started asserting both inside and outside home. Many of the women victims who were helped by the leadership in some way, joined DISHA either as volunteers or full time paid staff. With the help of these volunteer-cum-workers, DISHA further expanded its activities among women. This strategy of focusing on individual cases thus constituted another powerful tool for empowering the women. It was observed that the maximum numbers of cases brought to DISHA were related to domestic violence. The cases are settled either through dialogues or sometimes through courts or *panchayats*. In the process, many women started learning the nitty-gritty of solving problems, which involved government officials or elected *panchayat* officials. DISHA often took up the cases of corruption prevailing in the government offices at the local level and acted as a pressure group with the help of the village women.

Formation of people's groups (also called the community-based organisations) and their involvement in the activities initiated by DISHA constituted an important dimension of its mode of intervention. DISHA organised a number of training camps

for women and men in the surrounding villages. The people observed and started realising the importance of collective action. In 1987 women's groups called *Mahila Jagriti Samitis* (MJS) were formed in six villages. A village woman called *sathin* was trained as the grassroots worker to carry out the organisational work in the village. The members started contributing one rupee per month as membership fee to make the MJS a self help group. The money thus collected was used for community work and fulfilling the emergency requirements of the members.

DISHA organised women's awareness camps at the village level. The leadership decided to hold monthly meeting-cum-camps at the centre. Women representatives from each project village used to participate in these camps. Their day-to-day problems were shared and discussed. Later, three-day residential camps were also organised. Information on various issues were disseminated through these camps. This resulted in securing involvement of people in organisational activities.

The people's groups were used as instruments to raise various issues like equal wage issue, liquor problem, atrocities on women, etc. Apart from the village level people's groups like MJS, the leadership felt the need to create a large-scale people's forum to sustain their struggle. Consequently, *Mahila Mazdoor Laghu Kisan Morcha* (MMLKM) was formed. The members of MMLKM started meeting at DISHA headquarter regularly on the 24th of every month. They also organised meetings in their villages to sort out the outstanding problems of the village. They started interacting with officials at *panchayat*, subdivision and district levels. Later on in 1993, the *Morcha* played a crucial role in the anti-liquor movement. It formed anti-liquor groups in several villages. These groups collected donations both in cash and kind to support the movement. There are about 7000 members associated with MMLKM.

Similarly, *Ghad Khsetra Mazdoor Morcha* (GKMM), the *baan* workers' association was formed in *Ghad* area. It raised the issue of people's right over the forest produce, particularly the *bhabbhar* grass. During 1990-93 they organised *baan* workers from about 22 villages against the non-co-operation and exploitation of the forest department.

At the village level, women's groups, called *sangh*, were formed as central component of the women's programmes. The *sangh* has been visualised as a forum for women to come together for dialogues leading to action for assertion of their rights and redressal of their problems. The core team members of DISHA are also the

members of these women's groups. Thus, in its approach, DISHA has given importance to formation of village level people's groups and large-scale people's associations, besides implementing the project-oriented activities. However, till date these people's associations heavily depend on DISHA for almost all kind of support. Although the leadership visualises them as an important tool to achieve the long-term objectives of the organisation, it has not made systematic efforts to make them self-reliant.

The communication team of DISHA has remained an integral part of the organisation's efforts in the field. It has always played a catalytic role in conscientising the people. It provides mobilisation support to all other programmes. For example, the communication team worked day and night during the anti-liquor and equal wage struggles. It staged almost one show every day during the Pathed anti-liquor movement. The communication team of DISHA sought to involve women. The participation of young Muslim women in street plays created a major stir and protests from the men. The team, however, does not have regular members to make it more effective. It draws the staff from other programmes to conduct its activities.

4.5.2 Shifting to Project Oriented Approach

In 1989, five years after its emergence, DISHA implemented the first major project called *Mahila Samakhya*. The proposal to link up the organisation with *Mahila Samakhya* first came in 1987 when the activities of labour education camps for women and the MJS (women's groups) were gaining momentum. DISHA took up the opportunity to expand its activities and extend its work among women. Starting from 42 villages, the project was expanded to 53 villages in the next year. Its basic objective was to generate awareness among women through literacy movement, non-formal educational programmes, and various training programmes. The staff selected for implementing the project (called *sahyogini*) had been associated with DISHA since its inception. They started their work with a two-month long survey, which allowed them to establish contacts and develop rapport with the villagers. They identified village level volunteers, called *sakhis*. The organisation formed *Mahila Sangh* (women's group) in each of these villages. Many more village level and middle level women workers got associated with the organisation through this project. The basic tenets of

the project to deal with the day-to-day problems of the women activated a large number of village women. The village level volunteers took many initiatives.

In the same year, DISHA also took up projects on education and self help groups (SHGs) in 10 villages. However, the increasing pressure of the project-related work started affecting the mode of intervention in the field. The recurrent project report writing, conducting number of training programmes within a fixed time frame, monitoring, and evaluating the progress of the project, reduced the time and effort on the non-project activities. During the past few years, this phenomenon has become more visible.

In 1993-94, the sponsors of *Mahila Samakhyia* asked DISHA to hand over the programme to them. DISHA, however, refused to do so. Consequently, the agency withdrew their support to the programme. DISHA then approached many other donor agencies to seek their support for the programme. When it could not get support from the funding agencies, it also contacted the government. In 1994, MISEREOR (a foreign funding agency) agreed to support the programme with some modifications. While *Mahila Samakhyia* as part of empowerment had supported only the organisational functions leading to the formation of *mahila sangh* in the villages, MISEREOR emphasised the goals like literacy, health, self help groups (SHGs), and legal aid. It may be noted that during this period, DISHA also expanded its activities to the neighbouring hill districts of Uttar Kashi and Tehri.

The process of expansion diverted the focus of attention of the leadership from the Sultanpur area to other new areas. Simultaneously, there was a shift in the approach of the grassroots workers while dealing with SHGs, women education and *panchayati raj*. Their approach became more instrumental guided by the requirements of the projects rather than the needs of the people. During my field visits to the villages and meetings with the project in-charge, I noticed that majority of them were unwilling to address issues which were not the part of their formal responsibilities. The projects were launched without undertaking necessary groundwork. For example, the grassroots workers failed to develop a comprehensive understanding of the SHG project. According to one of the most vocal and active Muslim women worker, "we could not conceptualise the SHG beyond collecting monthly contributions and maintaining proper records. It has become so monotonous that I have slowly started losing interest and enthusiasm." I also found discrepancies in the information and

inputs that were given to the SHG members in different villages. Explaining the reasons behind this, one staff said,

SHG programme was launched with incomplete information to the SHG co-ordinators and the SHG members. Each co-ordinator was simply asked to start 10 SHGs as part of their respective quota of work. The co-ordinators in turn sought the help of erstwhile *sakhis* (the village level women volunteers) and the male staff.

During their visits to the village, the SHG co-ordinator would contact the member secretary of the SHG (most of them worked earlier as *sakhi* in *Mahila Samakhya* programme). They in turn would call a few members of the SHG and conduct the meeting. At the end of meeting, the co-ordinator would assign some assignment to the member secretary of the SHG to be completed before the next meeting. The co-ordinators no more take personal initiatives to contact the members and motivate them to participate in the organisational activities.

During the initial years of intervention, when there was not much pressure of the project related activities, many initiatives and individual cases were taken by the workers. They had enough time to address the issues raised by the target group. During the later phase, with increasing emphasis on the project-related activities, the organisation had to make compromises in its mode of intervention to fulfil the expectations and priorities of the donors. Non-project based interventions based on people's prioritised needs slowly reduced to occasional handling of individual cases.

These changes in the approach of grassroots workers have also affected the nature and degree of people's participation in the programme. On Feb 13, 1998, a three-day training camp for the SHG secretaries and treasurers was organised. Out of 18 SHGs which were supposed to participate in the training programme, only four groups were represented on the first day. Out of the expected 36 participants, only 14 could turn up till the last day of the training programme. There was no participation from the area of three SHG co-ordinators out of total six SHG co-ordinators. Commenting upon the lack of participation in the training programme, one of the oldest volunteers and an executive body member of the organisation said, "The SHG co-ordinators do not go to the village regularly. Even during their visits to the village, they would not contact the members directly. At the most they would contact the *sakhis*, and ask them to call other members." It may be noted that the purpose of organising the training programme was to streamline the whole SHG project and to

remove the discrepancies noticed in different villages. The impact of such a training programme to achieve its objectives is yet to be seen.

Another important phenomenon which emerged due to increasing emphasis on the project-oriented approach was related to the training programmes. Before 1992, the training programmes were normally held in villages. This used to generate interest and awareness amongst villagers in general. Besides participants, the other villagers also used to participate in these programmes. Later on, increased focus on projects introduced well-structured project-specific training programmes. They brought fixed inputs and pre-decided methodology for imparting training. The training programmes were conducted in the training centres by hired professionals. However, this new mode of training could not arouse expected interest amongst the common village women. They somehow failed to comprehend the usefulness of the training and its implications in day-to-day life.

4.5.3 Expanding the Field Area

DISHA started its work from two villages, viz., Ferozabad and Pathed, with the help of two volunteers. During the first three years, the organisation concentrated its efforts in a few selected villages, where some volunteers were actively associated with its activities. In 1985, DISHA undertook the problem of water logging which had affected fifteen villages. People's committees were formed in the affected villages. Dialogues were initiated with various governmental agencies. The problem took five years to solve with the co-operation from Council for Advancement of People's Action through Rural Technology (CAPART). In 1987, DISHA undertook a massive drought relief programme in about 40 villages. *Kisan Mazdoor Samitis* (groups of farmers and labourers) were formed in these villages. A memorandum was presented to the District Magistrate. Similarly, in the neighbouring Sadholi Qadim block the leadership approached the *baan* workers through the *baan* workers of village Khera Mewat. The overall trend of yearly change in the working area of the organisation is shown in Table 4.4.

It may be observed that in the year 1989, DISHA expanded its activities to 42 villages through *Mahila Samakhyas* project. The project was extended to 53 villages in the next year. From 1989, one can also notice a decline in the number of villages where

DISHA intervened through non-project based activities.

Table 4.4: Working Area of DISHA (No. of Villages)

Year	Sarsawa		Sadholi Qadim	
	Project Based	Non Project Based	Project Based	Non Project Based
1984	5	1		
1985	5	15		
1986	5	15		
1987	22	40		
1988	22	10	1	5
1989	42	14	1	5
1990	53	14	7	22
1991	53	4	7	22
1992	53	4	7	22
1993	53	4	7	22
1994	53	-	6	-
1995	50	-	6	-
1996	50	-	6	-

In Sadholi Qadim block, overall 22 villages were involved in *ghad* area. The workers were actively involved in conscientising and motivating the *baan* workers on the issue of *bhabbhar* grass. However, in 1993 when the *baan* workers arrived at some temporary agreement with the forest officials on the issue, the presence of organisation in those villages reduced drastically. From 1994, DISHA has been active in six villages of the block largely through education centres for women and girls and SHGs.

In 1992, when the organisation further expanded its activities to the neighbouring districts of Uttar Kashi and Tehri Garhwal, the focus on non-project activities also declined. Thus starting its mission from five villages in 1984, DISHA has expanded its activities to 60 villages. *However, this process of expansion has been associated with a more diffused and less intensive mode of intervention.*

4.5.4 Particularistic Approach

Right from the beginning, DISHA paid greater attention to the problems of

weaker sections, particularly the women from these sections. This trend can be observed in the projects and programmes implemented by it and as discussed in the previous sections. The income-generating programmes like sewing, knitting and electronics training were all meant for women. Adult education classes were organised primarily for women and girls. Similarly, health activities also focussed on women. Training of *dais* (midwives) was a major component of the health programme. Mass awareness campaigns, which were carried out to educate people in general, also targeted women in particular.

Even the individual cases involving family disputes were taken up by the organisation primarily to help women. The cases of atrocities against women come to DISHA not only from its working area but also from the nearby blocks and districts. *Mahila Samakhya*, which was the first major project launched by the organisation, was basically a women's project. In this project, all the workers from the grassroots level to the project in-charge level were women. Although, the project was closed in 1994, the community level women volunteers have continued their association with the organisation. The non-project activities like the struggle for equal-wages, and the anti-liquor drive were carried out by women. Consequently *the organisation is identified as a women's organisation*. A direct fallout of this particularistic approach to focus upon women's issues was that men became suspicious of the purpose of DISHA. Since they were not involved in the programmes, they had many doubts and questions in their minds.

Slowly, the leadership made efforts to involve the men from the poor and oppressed sections of the community. It increased the scope of interaction with the people. They started seeking queries and information on land-issues, wage-issues, and welfare schemes of *panchayat* and government. This prompted the organisational staff to collect relevant information on those issues. The ways and means were discussed to sort out such issues. However, till date *DISHA has not made any organised efforts to involve the people from the other sections of the community in its activities*. Consequently, during field visits, I found that people from the other sections had many misconceptions about the nature of the organisation and its work. They broadly identify it as anti-upper caste organisation.

4.5.5 Changing Role of the Leadership

The founder secretary and treasurer of DISHA were active in the field area since 1982. During 1982-84, they worked extensively in the area of health. The key persons from the villages, the other natives of the villages, and the volunteers still remember the fact that during the initial days, the leadership had a close interaction with the field and the people.

Slowly, with the increasing number of projects in the organisation, their visits to the field and interactions with the people have reduced significantly. The treasurer left the organisation in 1995 after her marriage. The secretary is primarily engaged in the organisational and administrative affairs and in meetings with NGOs, donors, state officials, or networks of NGOs. Thus with the incorporation of new projects, and expansion of its activities to other districts, the role of leadership has also changed.

4.6 THE CAPACITY BUILDING PROCESS

As discussed in Chapter 3, in this section we will describe the three broad categories of elements, which were perceived crucial by different collectivities for improving overall organised efforts of the organisation. An effort has been made to understand how these three elements have developed over the years and affected the different collectivities in the process.

4.6.1 The Human Resource Capacity

Starting with two people in 1984, DISHA had over 100 personnel in 1992. The founder secretary and the treasurer were active social activists before establishing DISHA. The other members of the first executive body were from different occupational background. Two local volunteers from the working area were nominated as executive body members. The detailed list of the first executive body is shown in Appendix XII. During the initial years, a team of volunteer-cum-activist was carrying out all activities with the help of secretary. Slowly, a formal three-tier organisational structure developed, as shown in Figure 4.1.

The first tier includes the chairman and secretary as active functionaries. Mr. K.N. Tewari (the founder secretary) continues to be the executive secretary of DISHA since its inception. He has been providing the leadership to the organisation. He

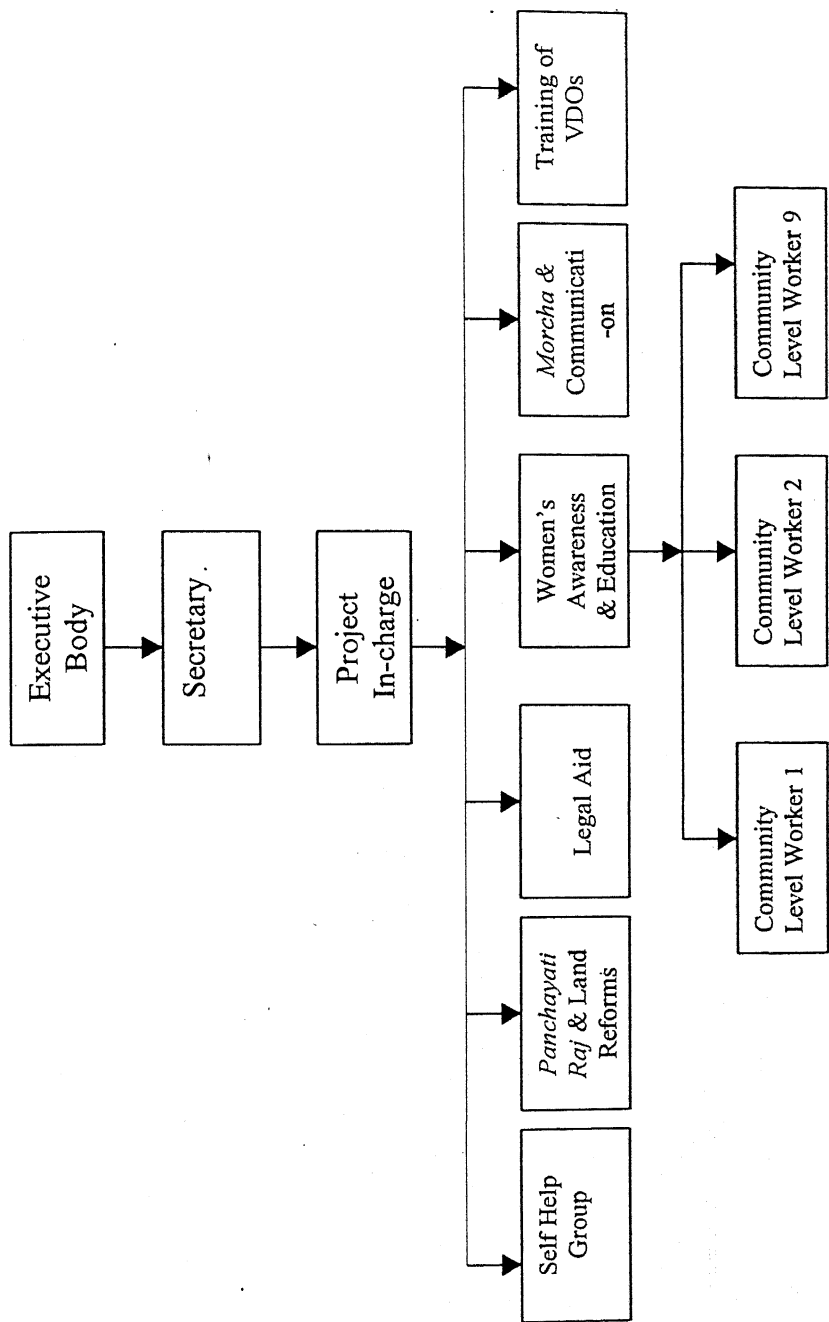


Fig. 4.1: Organogram of DISHA

manages overall affairs of the organisation. The middle tier constitutes the *core staff* which includes the secretary, the professionals and the grassroots workers. As part of the core staff, the secretary draws monthly salary from the organisation. As the chief, he also decides the salary of each staff. This dual role became more vivid after the projects started coming to the organisation in a big way. *The dual role of the secretary adds a new dimension to the ambiguities existing within the organisation.* The relationship between staff changed from that of partners working for common cause to an employer-employee relationship. During this study, the core team had a total of 24 members including the secretary (as mentioned earlier, this does not include the four members of the core team from the Hills Programme). The third tier includes community level volunteers, who represent the organisation at the village level. Besides them, there are five supporting staff members.

A project-wise distribution of the grassroots workers from the core staff is shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Project-wise Staff Distribution

Project	Grassroots Workers	
	Male	Female
Self Help Group	Nil	6
<i>Panchayati Raj</i> & Land Reforms	3	Nil
Legal Aid	1	1
Women's Awareness & Education	1	2
<i>Morcha</i> & Communication	6	1
Training of Voluntary Organisation	2	1
Total	13	11

The grassroots workers are from the working area of the organisation. Majority of them have emerged from the target group. Almost half of them are women. Out of 20 such workers, six are Muslims and the rest 14 are Hindus. All of them are literate and a few have also passed the Intermediate or High School examination. Most of these workers initially joined as volunteers. These workers can be classified into three broad categories on the basis of their experience in the

organisation. It is shown in the Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Number of Workers by Years of Work in DISHA

Years completed	Grassroots Workers
6	5
7-9	8
More than 9	5
Total	18

The secretary identified all the five workers (who are working in the organisation for more than 9 years) during his personal visits to the villages during initial years. He maintained personal relationship with the active members of the community. For example, Raitulal who has been associated with the organisation since its inception, says:

Tewariji used to visit our village quite often. He spent many nights in my house. He used to persuade me to join the organisation after observing my keen interest in solving the village problems. Although, I was heavily preoccupied with my own farm-work, I finally decided to join the organisation in 1985.

Similarly Md. Riyasat, who was earlier associated with CENDIT, was persuaded by the leadership not only to join the organisation as a worker but also to become a member of the executive body. Chand was a *baan* worker who used to pass through DISHA office on every market day to sell *baan* (ropes). The secretary enquired about problems of *baan* workers. He personally visited Chand's village and persuaded Chand to join DISHA and take up the issue of *baan* workers. Heena and Seema, were rescued from the family inflicted atrocities and helped by the leadership both morally and financially. They later became few of the most vocal women workers of the organisation.

The workers from the other two categories were initially associated as volunteers. They used to assist in implementing the programmes initiated by DISHA in their villages. Slowly, they were included in the core group of the organisation as full time workers. For example, Alltu and Vir were initially working as teachers in the schools started by DISHA in their villages. Babu was the secretary of *baan mazdoor*

samiti (a peoples group). Babu, Kumar and Som were *baan* workers and were earlier involved in the struggle of *baan* workers started by DISHA. Babu is also the village barber. Hussain, a Muslim, was an electrician. He was impressed by the work of DISHA and especially by the behaviour and personality of the leadership. Subsequently he started showing interest in the activities of DISHA and volunteered himself for social work. Som was a local artist. He was inducted into the organisation because of his artistic qualities. Raj had initially participated in some of the training programmes conducted by DISHA. Thus all of them were associated with DISHA in some way or the other. Eventually they joined the organisation formally and became member of the core group.

Working voluntarily on behalf of a social organisation provided them new experiences. It should be emphasised that it was the leadership, which first motivated them to join the organisation for community work. Financial benefits were not the sole reason for joining the organisation. Most of them had basic source of livelihood. Some were landholders. Some of them were working as daily-wage labourers. Babu, Kumar, Chand, and Ram were *baan* workers. Others were also engaged in some income generating activities. When I enquired about the benefits they have received from the organisation, only four out of eighteen respondents mentioned monetary benefit as the primary reason for joining the organisation. For others information, knowledge, awareness, social identity and prestige were the major benefits of joining the organisation.

At the village level, the erstwhile *sakhis* (community level volunteer) of the *Mahila Samakhya* programme continue to volunteer themselves as the contact person. Most of them are active members of the self help groups (SHGs) in their respective villages. Besides them, the teachers involved in women's education are also active in a few villages. A year-wise account of the number of core and field staff in DISHA is presented in Table 4.7.

The strength of village level field staff reflects a fluctuating trend. In 1989, with the introduction of *Mahila Samakhya* programme, organisation spread its activities to 42 villages in one year. The primary criterion for the selection of these community level workers (called *sakhis*) was their willingness to come to the centre and join residential training programme. Similarly, when the organisation decided to discontinue the

Table 4.7 Year-wise Changes in the Size of Staff

Year	Core Staff	Field staff
1984	4	3
1985	7	5
1986	8	6
1987	10	8
1988	11	13
1989	18	55
1990	19	73
1991	20	73
1992	21	73
1993	21	17
1994	23	10
1995	23	10
1996	23	10

Mahila Samakhya programme in 1993, it stopped paying monthly honorarium (Rs. 200) to the *sakhis*. This alienated many of them from the activities of DISHA. They were even dissuaded by their family members from spending time and energy in the organisational work. Although the *sakhis* have maintained their contacts with the organisational activities, their nature of association with the organisation has undergone a considerable change. They no more regularly attend the monthly meetings at the centre. The number of individual cases taken up by them has been reduced significantly during the past three to four years.

Since 1992, with the increasing load of the projects, and subsequently with the increasing technical demands, the organisation started employing professionals. In Uttarkashi, an engineer is monitoring the project on watershed development. A graduate with professional degree in social work is looking after the documentation, training inputs and networking with other small grassroots VDOs of the region. Similarly, a woman graduate with background in the mass communication profession is leading the SHG project. They are all from urban background and are alien to the area.

4.6.2 The Infrastructural Capacity

The organisation started its work from an old building, which was provided by the chairman of the organisation. The head-office of DISHA is presently located in this building. The organisation established a training-cum-residence centre on a separate plot of land donated by the chairman. In 1992, DISHA opened a branch office in a rented house in Uttar Kashi district. In 1994-95, MISREOR sanctioned Rs. 12 lakhs for the construction of a training centre. To understand how the inclusion of more and more project based activities influenced the nature of requirements of the organisation, the following paragraph from one of the project proposals sent to MISEREOR would be insightful:

To make the job really efficient, a computer is badly needed. A Xerox machine is extremely necessary as DISHA headquarter is situated in a remote area and even for a single copy, has to run to Saharanpur city, 20 Kms away. To run the computer and Xerox machine, a generator is also a must, as the electricity supply in the area is highly erratic and often there may be no electricity for weeks together. Accounts can then be computerised.

(Action Plan for MISEREOR Project)

During the study, DISHA had two jeeps, one motor bike, two generators and one computer.

In the beginning, the record keeping and documentation work were handled by the secretary and the treasurer. However, with the increasing load of work, many a times the queries from the donors could not be responded in time. The concerned donors brought this into the notice of the secretary. Subsequently, in 1993-94, a separate full time person was employed to take care of the documentation, report writing and correspondence. A qualified accountant was also appointed to maintain regular accounts. Even then the reports and other information on projects which were completed 3-4 years ago could not be properly documented. I found that most of the registers, which were supposed to be maintained as per the guidelines of the project, were lying almost untouched.

Whatever elements the organisation incorporated to strengthen its infrastructural capacity, came basically from outside. People's contribution in building them is negligible. The import of the infrastructures has affected the work culture and life style of the staff. This will be discussed in the next section.

4.6.3 Sustenance Capacity

From 1984 to 1989, the secretary, the treasurer, and a few volunteers were involved in carrying out all the activities. All of them were taking a token honorarium for their work. During these five years, the leadership identified a number of issues after a prolonged dialogue and discussions with the people. The organisation started small activities and tagged them with the government sponsored welfare and development schemes. These activities involved a large number of people from the target groups.

In 1989, after the acceptance of the first major project called *Mahila Samakhya*, the nature of involvement of the secretary started changing. Since then, he has been primarily involved in maintaining and sustaining the organisational needs. However, till date he has not been able to initiate any step towards making the organisation financially self-reliant. The primary reason being his preoccupation with various requirements of different projects being implemented at different places. In 1996-97 four donors, namely MISEREOR (Germany), IGSSS (New Delhi), CAPART (New Delhi) and BILANCE (Netherland) were supporting DISHA. Table 4.8 presents a year-wise account of the source and quantum of funding of DISHA. It is evident from the table that DISHA has managed more and more funds over the years and bulk of it has been received from the foreign donors. It has no resources of its own and intermittently it gets some grants from the Indian government. Since 1992 it has not received any grant from the government of India.

DISHA, however, took some measures to strengthen the financial base of the people's fronts like the MMLKM and the GKMM. During initial years, the volunteers and the workers used to launch annual campaigns and collect donations from the people. However, during the past few years, with increasing involvement of the workers in the project-related activities, this process has suffered a setback.

Like PANI, in case of DISHA also there were variations in the responses of different collectivities on the issue of capacity building. The leadership was more occupied in building a team of trained and qualified persons, linkages with other VDOs, and a strong infrastructural base. The professionals also emphasised the need for a team of technically trained grassroots workers. Financial self-reliance was seen by them as another important element to improve the overall performance of the

Table 4.8: Financial Outlay for Projects (in Rupees)

Year	Source		
	Foreign	Indian	Self
1984	23577	-	-
1985	91354	4350	-
1986	92350	5925	-
1987	276487	-	-
1988	40000	45237	-
1989	288700	-	-
1990	578387	-	-
1991	148202	150000	-
1992	267400	-	-
1993	392410	-	-
1994	558500	-	-
1995	55671	-	-
1996	433986	-	-

organisation. Similarly the grassroots workers gave more value to commitment, dedication, and motivation in voluntary activities rather than their personal financial security. The target group judged the organisational performance in terms of its capability to ensure the active involvement and participation in the emerging problems of the area. They said that their participation in *panchayat* activities, open meetings and assertions in front of the government officials had ultimately enhanced the overall capacity of the organisation to achieve its goal.

4.7 INTERNAL DYNAMICS

In this section, we will discuss about the nature of interaction among the leadership, the professionals and the grassroots workers. The nature of these interactions within VDOs to a large extent depends upon how these different collectivities perceive this phenomenon of social intervention. VDOs being an ambiguous zone of intersection of the formal world of bureaucracy and the informal world of association exhibits a complex interaction pattern. The following subsections

present some of these dilemmas and contradictions.

4.7.1 Changing Perceptions and Relationships

Majority of the core group members joined DISHA as volunteer-cum-activists before they become full time paid workers. Their perception about aims and objectives of the organisation was developed in the process of their active involvement with the struggle oriented activities undertaken by DISHA during the initial years. Their relationship with the leadership was that of followers, engaged in pursuing the same social cause. Consequently, the nature of interactions with the secretary and among themselves continued to remain open and informal. This perception about DISHA and relationships with the leadership apparently seems to continue, till date. Nonetheless, there have been subtle changes during the recent years. The interaction has become more ambiguous, after the organisation decided to go for a project-oriented approach in a big way. The relationships which were more like partners engaged in the same mission rather than an employee-employer relationship, are in the process of transition. They are becoming more formal and rule bound.

4.7.2 Towards Formalisation

The project brought in professionals, technical training inputs and a new working style. Inclusion of professionals in the core group since 1992 has generated a new interaction pattern within organisation. The divisions of work and responsibilities have changed. During the initial *process oriented phase*, the organisation was preoccupied with mobilisation and community organisation and the grassroots workers were responsible for all the activities in a fixed number of villages. It is shown pictorially in Figure 4.2.

During this phase, there was no fixed target, or formal job description for the volunteer-cum-activists. Whatever problems were brought to them by the villagers, they would make efforts to resolve them. However, with the increasing load of the project-based activities and the inclusion of professionals, the leadership has changed the work distribution pattern. Now each core staff member is responsible for a particular project/programme. This new pattern is shown in Figure 4.3.

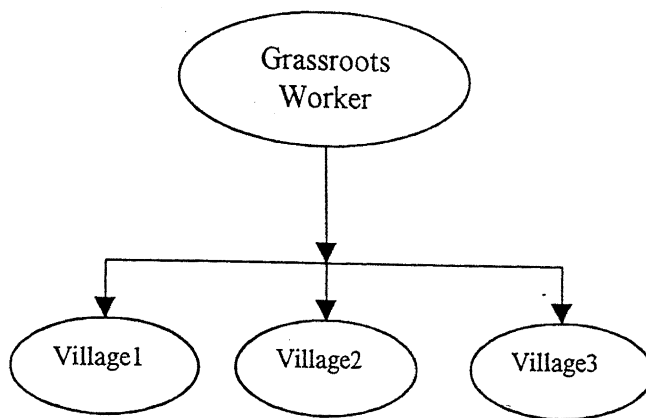
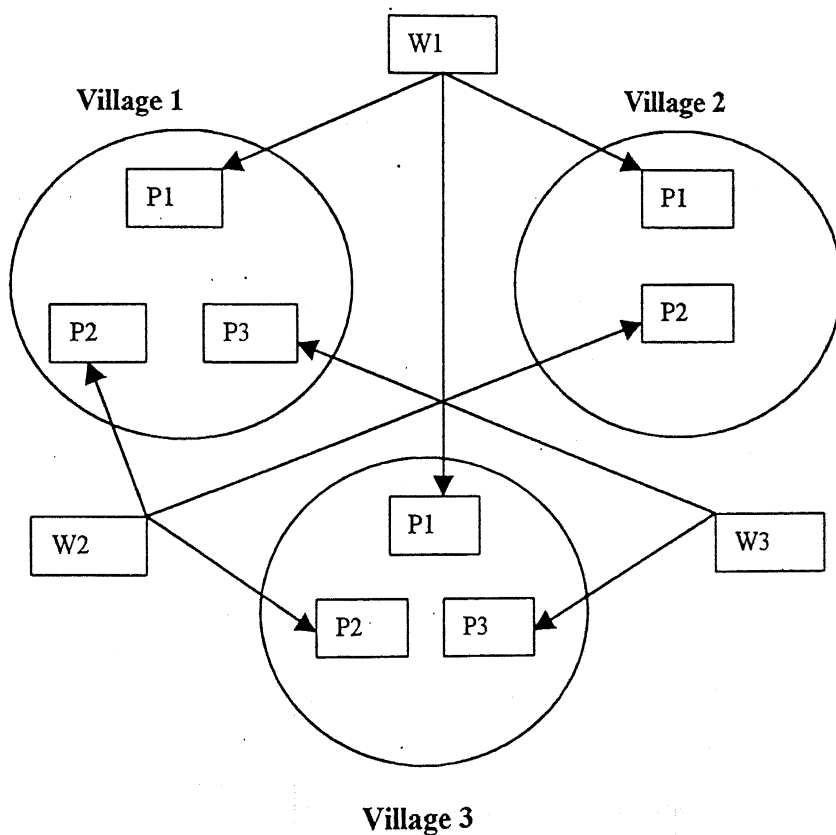


Fig. 4.2: Work Distribution Pattern during the Ice-Breaking Phase



W1, W2, W3: Workers
P1, P2, P3 : Projects

Fig. 4.3: Work Distribution Pattern during the Formalisation Phase

Professionals are responsible for timely completion of all the project requirements. They have to manage various administrative requirements of the project. They monitor and co-ordinate the field activities, arrange for proper training inputs for the workers, and prepare reports. Consequently they demand regular feedback and systematic reporting from the workers, both in verbal and written form. The field workers, however, are not used to report writing or other paper works. According to the secretary, "the workers believe in action and not in writing."

Professionals on the other hand, find gap between the expected and actual behaviour of the grassroots workers. For example in all the training programmes and the meetings, which I could attend during the field visit, it was observed that the professionals or/and the external trainers expressed their inability to conduct the programme smoothly. The workers were frequently going out, taking tea, and smoking even in the presence of the secretary. Whenever the trainers tried to maintain decorum and sought their co-operation in maintaining the schedule of the programmes, they failed. Professionals perceived this lack of necessary adjustment on the part of activists-cum-workers as a serious impediment in implementation of the project. However, according to some workers, they were not accustomed to the kind of discipline and regulations which the professionals wanted to implement. They wanted greater flexibility and openness in the programmes. This in turn generated conflicts.

There are other ambiguities and conflicts involved with the training programme. The organisation provides training to the core-group members both inside the organisation and outside. Any internal training programme is supposed to be invariably attended by almost all the members of the core-group. Many a times, the grassroots workers find these formal and technical training inputs not useful in the existing grassroots conditions. They fail to relate the training inputs with the assignments they are supposed to accomplish in the field. Similarly, sometimes the personnel sent to other organisations or cities for some specialised training are not related to the particular area. For example, when the leadership sent Mrs. Tasleema to Lucknow in a meeting on SHG, the SHG project in-charge was not consulted. The in-charge could not see any justification for this decision as Mrs. Tasleema was in no way attached to the SHG project. Similarly, once two other women workers were sent to attend a training programme despite the fact that both of them had to leave the organisation in a few months after their marriage. Again, Mrs Kishori was sent to

Bangladesh for SHG training programme, although she was in the charge of another project. Moreover, she did not formally share her experiences with the SHG team members. This, according to the project in-charge of SHG, adversely affects the quality of work. For example, it was observed that in many SHG groups, the account register was not maintained properly, and transactions were not recorded on time. There were errors in the calculation of interest rates by the SHG co-ordinator.

The formalisation process expects the workers to stick to time-bound and target-specific approach. The workers find it difficult to conform to such expectations, since they have not been accustomed to this type of work culture. Professionals, however, are very particular about it. Consequently, the efforts made towards formalising and systematising the responsibilities and accountabilities entail many ambiguities. For example, the community level volunteers who are also the village representatives of the MMLKM or/and GKMM meet once a month at DISHA head-office. Each village representative presents and shares the *Morcha* activities carried out by it during the previous month. Specific issues of individuals or groups from any village are discussed in this meeting. The ways and means to resolve the issues are also decided. The worker who is responsible for the *Morcha* activities in the village is supposed to co-ordinate the whole process. The leadership would frequently direct some other workers to co-operate in the process. To accomplish such non-project activities, the workers usually postpone or neglect their own project-related responsibilities. In the organisation, everyone seems to be doing everything else as well. While the multipurpose nature of workers serve some good purpose, it also detracts them from their particular responsibilities.

The grassroots workers find it difficult to manage the project-specific responsibility along with the non-project activities. On the one side the villagers approach them with various types of problems and disputes, and on the other side the project in-charge persuades to fulfil the project-related responsibilities first. To quote one of the workers,

For the past two years, we have been asked to concentrate on our particular assignments and report about them only. Earlier we used to enquire about other programmes in the village and we used to cover all the activities in the village in our reports.

Commenting on the same issue, another woman worker says,

Earlier Tewariji (i.e., the secretary) used to put us into many activities, e.g., the communication, SHG, *Morcha*, etc. Now Kaushal and Vineeta (the professional project in-charge) tell us to concentrate on the SHG project.

These ambiguities lead to misunderstanding between the professionals and the grassroots workers. They would approach the secretary, with their respective perspectives. In such a situation, the secretary finds himself at the crossroad. When I sought an explanation of the issue, the secretary quipped, "slowly with the passage of time, the problem will be settled."

The action and involvement of the leadership has also changed significantly after the formalisation process was set in with the increasing number of project based activities in the organisation. In the Indian context, the 'role-model' is of utmost importance to workers. Dedicated, competent and hard working leaders raise the workers' morale, while disinterest among leaders or inconsistency in their styles lead to alienation. The grassroots workers and the community level volunteers in DISHA have personally seen the arduous efforts made by the secretary during the initial years. He used to move around villages on bicycles and conduct village meetings at night, many times in adverse weather conditions. He used to share simple food offered by the villagers and sleep in their huts. The workers used to accompany him and co-operate with him in all matters. Slowly, the large projects brought new work opportunities for these workers in the organisation. The projects added to buildings, and brought vehicles, computers, TV, VCR, etc, in the name of capacity building. The secretary started getting involved more and more in the administrative affairs, networking, and co-ordination with the donors, and the frequency of his contact with the field started declining. The secretary could hardly make a visit in a jeep for a few hours once in two to three months.

However, the issues raised by the organisational staff during their dialogues with the people in the field remained same. The same old issues of class exploitation, atrocities of the state, pathetic conditions of the weaker sections and gender discrimination remained the focus of discussion with the same activists and the villagers. But the workers also noticed a change in the approach of the leadership. The mode of engagements of the secretary had changed. The professionals and other core staff observed the ambiguities and contradictions between the speech and practice.

This has adversely affected the overall morale of the workers. Even the workers who at one time used to move into villages and conduct meetings without caring for food or other comforts, now complain if they do not get tea and snacks in the weekly meetings held at the centre. Some of them would insist on visiting the villages in jeep only. Projects have brought in top-down approach, led to bureaucratisation and alienation.

It was observed that *along with the projects and its paraphernalia also came new expectations, new aspirations, and new behaviour pattern among the grassroots workers*. The grassroots volunteers started comparing their monthly honorarium with the amount of work they do. Some of them pointed out that with the villagers they talk about minimum wages, while they themselves are not duly rewarded. The grassroots workers, who joined as volunteer-cum-activists, now find it very difficult to accept the fact that their nature of *work* is different from a *job*. They compare their own remuneration with the salary of a professional or the secretary. In this context, some of the workers also pointed out towards the biased approach of the leadership. For example, one worker commented,

Tewariji has raised a few selected workers and villages. Chand and myself are the senior most workers of the organisation, even then we get less money than other (new) workers. Similarly, villages like Pathed, Khera Mewat, Jattowala, Sultanpur get special attention. Problems of these villages are solved on a priority basis.

Many workers shared similar sentiments on the biased treatment of the leadership towards a few workers and a few villages, even though they accept the valuable contribution made by Tewariji to improve their lives. A woman worker commenting upon the biased approach of the leadership said, "We know that no body in this area is going to give Rs. 1000 per month to a class eighth pass village girl." She was pointing towards herself, while making this comment.

The decision making process has become more centralised after the arrival of projects. To quote one of the executive body members and a senior most worker of the organisation, "It is true that we do not have any power to exercise or to take any decision." Some times even the annual executive body meeting does not take place properly. A person will go to the chairman who resides in Delhi and get the relevant papers signed by him. Similarly, the SHG project in-charge expressed her inability to take even trivial decisions related to the smooth execution of the project. For example, even after her repeated reminders to the secretary to resolve the issue of travelling

expenses of the SHG secretary/treasurer incurred during their visits to the bank, no decision was taken. Similarly the issue of allotting individual bank passbooks to each of the SHG members could not be resolved even after the assurance given to them in the beginning. Earlier, the leadership used to involve core-staff members in taking important decisions. With increasing load of formal projects, the project related decision making process has become highly centralised. However, in the case of non-project activities, even now the core-staff members are involved in decision making process.

4.8 DISHA VERSUS PEOPLE

4.8.1 The Interaction Process

The nature of interaction between the target group and other collectivities in DISHA can be analysed in two phases. The first phase may be called the *process oriented phase*. During this phase (which continued upto 1989), the primary emphasis was on mobilisation and conscientisation of the target group. DISHA in this phase undertook many issues at the personal, family, and the community level. Leadership frequently visited the villages. The leadership helped many individuals in distress. The organisation resolved a large number of family disputes. At the community level, it resolved the water-logging problem affecting the lands of 15 villages, and launched struggles for equal wages, anti-liquor drive, protest of *baan* workers, etc. The *Mahila Samakhya* project of 1989 supplemented its struggle-oriented efforts through *sakhis* and *sahyoginis*. This phase generated a lot of expectations among the participant group at the village level. The reason was that the information disseminated by the organisation through individual contacts, village meetings, or street plays covered a wide range of issues. The inefficiency and negligence of the *panchayat* officials, block development officers (BDOs), and other government officials were exposed. The leadership encouraged the women to form their own groups and associations. The interaction with the community was quite frequent and closely monitored at all levels of the organisational hierarchy.

During this phase, all the programmes and projects in a village were largely co-ordinated and managed by the same workers who had developed a close personal and emotional relationship with the target group. These workers used to accompany the

individuals or groups to the *panchayat* officials, and other government officials to sort out their problems. The interaction among the leadership, the volunteers-cum-grassroots workers and the people during this phase was quite frequent and informal. It can be shown in Figure 4.4.

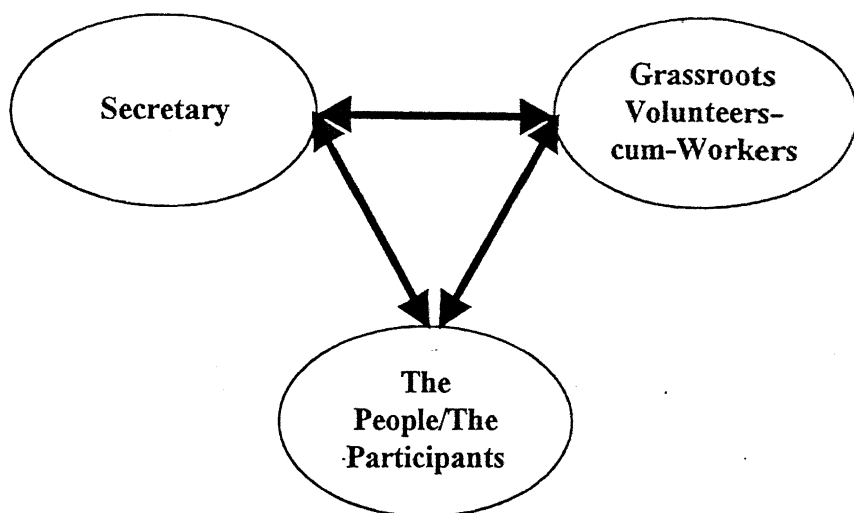


Fig. 4.4: Interaction Pattern during the Ice-Breaking Phase

The second phase (from 1992 onwards) may be called the *formalisation phase*. In this phase the organisation expanded its activities to Uttar Kashi district. It received more projects. The increasing diversification of the organisational work into different regions and on different issues, affected the interaction pattern among different collectivities, particularly with the community. The responsibility of the grassroots workers started becoming more ambiguous. In addition to carry out the project responsibilities they were supposed to handle three *Morcha* villages, as discussed in the previous section. This new mechanism resulted in multiple interventions in the same village by different workers. The time, energy, and attention of the grassroots workers were now divided between various types of activities. Consequently, the grassroots level problems, which could not be covered under a specific project, were neglected. The intensity of interaction with the community declined. Engagements of the secretary in external meetings and administrative work diffused his interactions with the grassroots workers. His contacts with the field reduced. This affect pattern and frequency of interaction among the different collectivities of DISHA can be shown in Figure 4.5. In this figure, the width of the arrows shows the frequency of interaction

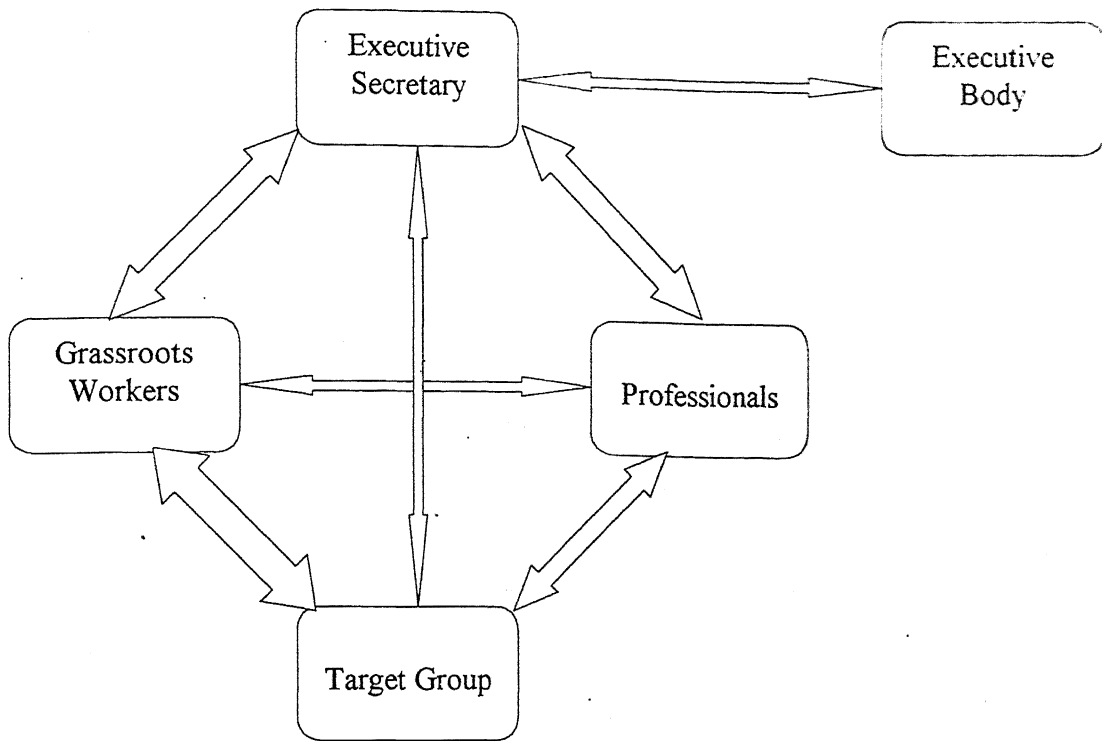


Fig. 4.5: Interaction Pattern during Formalisation Phase

between two collectivities.

This new interaction pattern has contributed significantly to the reduced participation of the people in the regular village meetings. In the annual *Morcha* conference, people's participation has declined significantly during the last three to four years. During my visits to a number of SHG villages, I was frequently pointed out by the SHG leader that the group members do not come for meetings, and they do not deposit their monthly contribution on time. In the beginning when SHG was started, meetings were held regularly and members themselves deposited monthly contribution on time. Slowly it became the responsibility of the group leader to organise SHG meetings by personally requesting the members and collecting money from them. Now even the group leaders find it difficult to collect the monthly contributions from the members. It is only when the SHG co-ordinator from the organisation visits the village, and asks the members to deposit their monthly contribution, they would deposit the money.

The members of the SHGs on the other side complain that the workers do not spend sufficient time with them in the village. According to them, during their visits,

the workers would fill up the register, conduct meetings, collect money and go away. The efforts of the workers have become more instrumental in nature. In majority of the SHGs, the monthly meetings were not being held regularly. According to an old volunteer from Bahadra village,

The SHG members do not show interest in holding the SHG meetings regularly. I myself collect money from the members and deposit it in the bank. Since the members have faith in me, they prefer to deposit the money with me instead of the SHG treasurer or the secretary.

Explaining the reasons behind the lack of interest shown by the members in the meetings and discussions, she explained that the members of the SHG expect tangible economic benefits. She regretted that even after 10 years of her continuous work in the village, the villagers have not been able to understand the importance of the information and knowledge provided by DISHA. Even her own husband, who had initially proposed her name for *sakhi*, now opposes her involvement in the organisational work since she no more gets the monthly honorarium. According to him the same time can be utilised in some productive work. She finally suggested that the organisation should start some income generating activities for them.

Another important reason from the people's perspective which adversely affected their participation, is unfulfilled promises made by the SHG co-ordinators. For example, in village Khera Mewat, the SHG members reportedly claimed that in the beginning SHG co-ordinator had promised to provide one buffalo to each member after three years. However, according to the SHG project in-charge, the SHG co-ordinators were told that after three years each SHG could take loan from the banks, which could be utilised to start some income generating activities like rearing buffaloes. The confusion created a sense of disenchantment among the people. In some villages, where a few SHG members wanted to start some income generating activities, they could not be properly facilitated by the SHG co-ordinator. When the SHG co-ordinator was asked about it, she responded that although she wanted to do something for the members, she could not do anything because of inadequate support from her superiors.

Again, in the SHG meetings, members frequently discuss about the issue of misappropriation of funds by *panchayat* officials. But they fail to notice any initiatives being taken by the organisational workers. In one village, when a villager approached

the SHG co-ordinator and requested her to do something regarding certain problems of the village, the co-ordinator simply refused to do anything and said that the concerned work was not her responsibility.

The interaction with the community also reflects uneven focus of attention and unequal distribution of resources among the villages. Even the grassroots workers from other villages complain against this trend. In the village Nathmalpur, during a village meeting the villagers complained that the organisation never organised a video-show in their village, while in one of the neighbouring villages (Pathed), it was a frequent phenomenon. According to them, the people of Pathed have received other benefits from DISHA, which they never got.

The involvement of the villagers in the village level interactions has also been narrowed down. Initially many people from the weaker and backward sections used to come to meetings and share their problems, now it is just the SHG members. That too, not all the members attend these meetings. Moreover, this phenomenon is not limited to SHGs only. Even the participation in annual conference of the MMLKM has reduced sharply in the past few years. According to one senior most worker, "Last year before the annual conference, we had convened a meeting of the *Morcha* representative at the centre. Out of expected 120 members, only 12 to 15 turned up."

Many workers and the *Morcha* representatives do not know about the constitution of the *Morcha*. No systematic follow up measures are taken on the decisions of the annual *Morcha* conference. Many *Morcha* representatives do not go to the monthly meetings held at the centre. They do not organise monthly meetings of the *Morcha* in their respective villages. The *Morcha* convenor accepts that its activities have declined during the past few years and the workers could not spare sufficient time in villages. The workers, according to him, are preoccupied with other project-related assignments. This change in the nature of interaction between the people and the other collectivities has adversely affected the degree and quality of people's participation. The staff members have started acting more like agents of input delivery and the people are becoming recipient of these inputs. Initiatives, innovations, and people's organisation in the second phase have become rare.

4.8.2 The Impact and Implications

The primary image of DISHA developed among the people in general is that it is a women's organisation. People in the area usually call it DISHA *mahila sangthan* (women's association). Even the letters to the organisation from the people of the area are addressed as DISHA *mahila sangthan*. The interventions made by DISHA at the grassroots level have initiated a process of interaction with the people. This has further led to the process of interaction within village, among the members of the target group themselves and also with the other sections of the community. This process has strengthened confidence of the women from weaker sections of the community in particular. It has been reflected time and again in the form of their open and active participation in various struggles and campaigns, their interaction with the government officials, their group activities and also their individual efforts. However two distinct trends can be observed. First, there are activists turned paid worker of the organisation. They are capable to manage and resolve the problems of an individual or a group with the co-operation of the other concerned persons. Second, there are majority of target group members, who still depend on these workers even for works like organising regular meetings in the villages, visiting the *panchayat* officials or any other government official to resolve their problems. However, even among them one can observe the change in the form of their coming out of the veils, participation in the meetings, sharing their problems, and discussing the ways and means to resolve them. They are no more strictly confined within the boundary of their household activities. They can talk and argue with outsiders, *panchayats* officials, or other government officials in the presence of DISHA workers. According to a member of the target group, "DISHA has instilled confidence in us. Now we can go to any office and talk to the officials without any fear. Police can no more come and harass us like before."

Also with the increasing awareness, they started coming up with new problems on diverse issues. This motivated the organisational staff to equip itself adequately to handle new issues. The leadership used to discuss and devise the ways and means to resolve those issues. However, with the increasing attention on the project-based activities, the trend has started changing. The flow of inputs and information are becoming unidirectional, i.e., from the organisation to the target group. The organisation finds it extremely difficult to accommodate the demands and suggestions

from the people.

Another important outcome of the overall interaction process with the community is its identity not only as pro-poor and pro-weaker but also as anti-upper class organisation. The failure on the part of DISHA to initiate any systematic dialogue with the sections other than the target group has alienated them from the other social groups. Consequently, the other sections do not participate even in the constructive programmes like running children's education centres, SHG, etc. Within the target group, the general image of the organisation as women's organisation has alienated men from the day-to-day activities of the organisation. Men's participation is confined to limited occasions like certain functions, processions and conferences.

From the beginning DISHA made efforts to start some income generating activities. However, none of them could be sustained. In case of weavers, they could not get adequate and regular supply of raw materials in time. The village women who were trained in tailoring could not stand in the market. Once again DISHA is making efforts towards strengthening the economic base of the target group through the self help groups (SHGs) project. This initiative has only helped the poor members to take loan from the group to fulfil their family and social needs. Although there have been discussions and debates within the organisation about starting some income generating activities, they could not start anything. Many of the members are sceptical about their own capability to start some income generating activity and repay the loans. Some of them even doubt the feasibility of undertaking any group activity. Organisation has so far not been able to come up with clear-cut policies and strategies to address these dilemmas of the target group.

4.9 CONCLUSION

DISHA began its work as an informal association, with the efforts made by the founder secretary, the founder treasurer and a few local volunteers. They started their work from a few selected villages with the principle objective of *empowering the powerless*. The organisation basically focussed its activities on women, particularly the women from the backward castes. They conceptualised people's mobilisation, people's education, and people's organisation as their basic mode of intervention. During the phase of conceptualising the prospective identity of the organisation, the leadership

involved a few key persons from the target population.

In the beginning, during the ice-breaking phase, short duration projects were taken up. This helped in initiating a process of interaction and developing rapport with the people. During the process of interaction, certain needs of the target group were identified. The leadership made efforts to fulfil those emerging needs with the active participation of the people. Thus, during the initial years, most of the initiatives were taken up inadvertently in the process of intervention. The workers used to get adequate space to address non-project issues raised by the target group. The initial failures to get adequate support and co-operation from the state agencies motivated them to mobilise and conscientise the people on various issues. The eventual focus on community *mobilisation* was thus the outcome of a series of experiences, through which the leadership, the volunteers, and the people went through. The mobilisation process generated a group of motivated activists, who have been working as full time core group members of DISHA.

During the initial years, the mode of intervention was primarily guided by the stated philosophy of the organisation. The leadership made efforts to form people's groups at the village level. Individual cases of women, women's awareness camps, street plays, and people's front were used to involve the women and ensure their active participation in the organisational activities. Struggle-oriented activities like equal wage issue, anti-liquor drive, atrocities on women, etc. were taken up to mobilise the people.

From 1989, with the incoming of the first major project, there was a decline in number of villages, which were covered through non-project-based activities. The expansion of the projects in the neighbouring districts of Uttar Kashi and Tehri Garhwal in 1992 further diffused the attention on the non-project-based activities. From 1992 onwards with the increasing density of the project-oriented activities, the organisation started employing some professionals. The whole infrastructural capacity changed. The people found it difficult to reconcile with the sudden changes in work culture and the associated lifestyle of the staff. The leadership's direct interaction with the field and the people started declining. The decision making process became centralised. Conflicts started arising in the perspectives and approaches of the activists turned workers and the professionals. The professionals started demanding regular feedback from the grassroots workers in formal terms. They emphasised on observing

discipline and following regulations to achieve the time bound targets. The workers, who were accustomed to flexibility and informality, started finding it difficult to reconcile with and manage simultaneously the project-based and the non-project activities. Along with the projects and its paraphernalia also came new expectations, new behaviour pattern and new conflicts. They became more visible during the phase of formalisation and expansion.

Resource dependence of the organisation on external funding adversely affected the efforts to follow a consistent mode of intervention. On the one hand the leadership did not want to do away with the original emancipatory ideas, and on the other hand the pressures of project-based activities did not provide enough time and space for undertaking non-project based activities. The dilemma is yet to be resolved. Greater reliance of DISHA on project-based activities during its later phases diverted the attention of the leadership from the field and the activities of the people's fronts. It became preoccupied with the security concerns of the organisation and fulfilling the project requirements. It also created ambiguities of roles and relationships with respect to the project and the non-project responsibilities. The interaction on their emerging problems of the people reduced significantly. The target group members have become more like the recipients of the benefits rather than the active participants in the process of social change and development.

Due to its focus on women's issues, the general image of the organisation among the community as well as the target group members is developed as a women's organisation. Many people from the field area also perceive it as anti-upper caste organisation. The efforts made by the leadership to strengthen people's fronts declined after the incoming of projects in a big way. People basically understand these fronts to be part of DISHA, since all the activities of the fronts are financially and technically supported by DISHA. A majority of the active members of the fronts was not clear about the purpose of forming such fronts. Nonetheless, the process initiated by DISHA has helped in increasing awareness among the target group. A few members from the target group have started coming up with new problems on diversified issues. The activist-cum-workers try to analyse and resolve the problems of individuals and groups. They learn from the past mistakes and incorporate the lessons to tackle the future challenges.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter begins with a summary of the conceptual framework and research design. They are followed by a discussion and analysis of the major findings. An attempt has been made to show that the voluntary development organisations (VDOs) pass through different phases. These phases are marked with similarities and dissimilarities in the organisational structure and processes. During the process of formalisation and expansion, VDOs exhibit multifarious inconsistencies and conflicts. Their theoretical and practical implications have been discussed. Finally, we present some points that may help future research in the field of sociology of voluntarism.

5.1 THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In the recent past, VDOs have emerged as one of the major social, cultural and ideological actors of civil society. The increasing alienation of people from the process of social change and development initiated by the state and the market has led many towards the civil society, in general, and the VDOs, in particular. The presence of VDOs at the grassroots level in remote areas, their close and direct interaction with the people, and their flexible work culture have been highlighted positively by planners and policy makers. They are projected as potent instruments to ensure people's participation in the developmental process. However, a lack of sociological studies on VDOs makes the adequate theorisation of the voluntary sector difficult. There is a need to explore the fundamental features of this sector for developing a comprehensive understanding of VDOs from the participants' perspectives.

The causes of VDO boom, and their consequences are very complex. On one hand the VDOs are perceived as the agents of the capitalist state. On the other hand, they are looked upon as social agents, working for people's empowerment and capacity building of the civil society. They are seen to be active from the micro level to macro level. They focus either on specific issues, or adopt a holistic approach to community development. Their roles vary from welfare and development delivery

agencies to advocacy and mobilisation of the target group(s). They work on non-profit basis, and are normally apolitical in nature. The modes of intervention vary from the efficient delivery of *projects as concrete products* primarily through *hired professionals*, to an increasing emphasis on the *process of conscientisation and mobilisation*. Involving people in the organisational activities, however, remains their common concern. They demand different kinds of organisational structures, roles, relationships, working environment, and patterns of interaction. This introduces multifarious complexities, ambiguities and conflicts in the VDOs.

To capture the totality of the complexities and ambiguities in the VDOs, we have modified the Weberian framework of organisation. We feel that conceptualising VDOs as a bureaucratic or a corporate organisation fails to resolve anomalies in observation and theorisation. In the ongoing socio-political debates, VDOs cannot be looked upon as mere 'agents' or 'organisations' of development.

VDOs being a manifestation of collective value rational action should be analysed and understood as an *autonomous* system of action which exists at the interface between the small voluntary groups or associations existing at the interactional level, and the movements existing at the societal level. We argue that to develop a holistic understanding of this system of collective voluntary action, it should be situated in the broader structural framework of civil society. VDOs can, therefore, be conceptualised as the *organised and legitimised manifestation of collective value rational action in civil society*. Understanding VDOs in the adding of civil society framework not only deconstructs and demystifies certain prevalent notions about VDOs, but also adds some new dimensions to voluntarism. It projects them as an aspect of public space¹. It also puts them on equal footing with the state and market agencies. In this context, this thesis broadens the conceptual arena of the VDOs and adds a new dimension to it by including under its ambit the *people* usually called the target groups. It considers the people as a crucial collectivity besides the executive body, the professionals and the grassroots workers. To examine the internal organisational process and complexities of the VDOs at the grassroots level, we have set the following objectives:

1. to examine the factors which led to the emergence of the voluntary

¹ Public space here implies arena of actions and interactions beyond the individually perceived private space.

development organisations;

2. to examine the nature of interventions initiated by the voluntary development organisations in the field;
3. to analyse the approaches of intervention in the field;
4. to examine the process of emergence of a structure in a voluntary development organisation;
5. to analyse the process of capacity building and its impact on diverse roles in a voluntary development organisation;
6. to examine the impact of mode of interventions and the development of structure on the process of interactions between the leadership, professionals and the community level workers ; and
7. to examine the dynamics of interactions between the target groups (i.e., the people) and the other collectivities in the voluntary development organisations.

The above objectives are achieved by exploring answers to the research questions mentioned in the first chapter.

The conceptual framework developed for this study attempts to understand the dynamics of VDOs associated with the theory and practice, the kind and mode of interventions, the interaction patterns, and the process of capacity building. It delineates two ambiguous categories of VDOs. The first category includes those VDOs, which emphasise the delivery of well-designed projects (as readymade products) under the guidance of hired professionals. The second category includes those VDOs which give primacy to the *process* of 'people's coscientisation' and 'people's mobilisation'. In the absence of any other terminology, in this study we term them as *product oriented VDOs* and *process oriented VDOs*, respectively. It may be noted that both of them aspire to ensure people's participation in the organisational activities to achieve their goals.

5.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

We have selected two cases of VDOs, one each from the two broad categories which have emerged from our conceptual framework. They are active at the grassroots level in the rural areas of Uttar Pradesh state. Both the VDOs emerged during 1980s when the voluntary development sector in India started receiving substantial massive financial support from foreign funding agencies as well as from the State. As of today, both of them are dependent on external funding, which is commonly the case with the overwhelming majority of VDOs in the country. Strategically, they primarily focussed their attention on issues related to women. They also targeted the socially and economically deprived classes and castes. Their modes of intervention, however, differ. People's Action for National Integration (PANI) intervenes in the field through well-designed projects. It has employed professionals to co-ordinate the project activities. Disha Social Organisation (DISHA), on the other hand, initiated the organised grassroots actions by taking up issues that emerged during the process of intervention. DISHA has primarily implemented its activities through the grassroots level volunteers-cum-activists.

Tools like interviews, observations, focus group discussions, village meetings, informal discussions, and questionnaires were used to generate data. Insiders' perspectives in the field settings were unearthed through discussions and triangulation of methods. Analysis and interpretation of the data were presented before the subjects and modified in the light of their reactions before drawing the conclusions.

5.3 MAJOR FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

While analysing the findings of this study, we have identified four distinct phases through which the VDOs pass through during the process of their growth. These are: (a) the *phase of conceptualisation*; (b) the *phase of ice-breaking*; (c) the *phase of formalisation*; and (d) the *phase of expansion*. Each phase is marked by its distinctive features in terms of the nature of intervention, mode of intervention, its capacity, and the nature of interaction among diverse collectivities. The following sections describe major issues, ambiguities and dilemmas in each phase.

1. The Phase of Conceptualisation

This phase refers to the initial stage of dialogue and discussion amongst the founding members before the formation of the VDO. During this phase, the

prospective identity of the organisation is developed, and the ways and means to realise that identity are conceptualised. A decision regarding the aims and objectives of the organisations is taken. The mode of intervention in the field is also planned. As an outcome of this process, VDOs manifest themselves as a formal and legal entity.

The emergence of a VDO owes to voluntaristic as well as the structural factors. During the phase of conceptualisation, basically the executive/governing body remains active. To be more precise, it is only a few members of this collectivity who actively involve themselves in the process of deciding the prospective vision and mission of the VDO. They include those members who provide active leadership to the VDO in its successive phases. They decide about the concrete activities of the VDO with the realisation that the grassroots situation abounds with tremendous challenges, and the government has its limitations to address them effectively. The issues of aims, objectives, orientation, approach, resources, manpower and local level support system are all decided by the leadership/founding-fathers. In case of the process oriented VDO, a few key persons from the field area may also be involved during the formative period of conceptualisation. However, on the whole, during the conceptualisation phase (despite the knowledge of the centrality of the people's role) the leadership in both the cases fails to involve the people in general. The crises and contradictions existing at the grassroots level, and their prioritisation in terms of degree of severity are perceived, analysed, and decided by the leadership in their own way. They themselves decide upon the strategies and approaches to be adopted in the field after which the actual process of interventions begins after this much of exercise.

2. The Phase of Ice-Breaking

This phase refers to the first few years of activities after the inception of the organisation. A VDO, in this phase, is not rigidly *bound* up with project-specific activities. There is no formal organisational structure, and division of roles. The organisation seems to possess a flat and fluid structure. Everyone, including the leadership, is expected to engage in everything. Presence of hired professionals and paid grassroots workers is minimal. Besides the leadership, a few local volunteers lend their services to the organisation. They get some token money as an honorarium for this.

During the phase of ice-breaking, the *leadership* and the *people* are the two major active collectivities. The leadership, in this phase, is not burdened with many project-related responsibilities. They get time and space to materialise their ideas in

the field and go beyond project specific activities. In case of project-oriented development approach, the leadership is primarily involved in making efforts to manage financial support for initiating well-designed project. They remain preoccupied in contacting the potential donors, and persuading them of the need to start a particular project in a specific area. Consequently, from the very beginning, their interaction with the people in the field remains low.

However, in case of a process oriented VDO, the leadership utilises this period basically in building rapport with the people. They would regularly visit field areas, on foot or bicycle. At night, they often stay in the villages and dine with the people. The individual as well as the collective problems of the villagers are shared and discussed. Ways and means to resolve their problems are chalked out, and the leadership makes efforts towards the decided goals. The people are involved in implementing various activities. This approach helps to develop a shared understanding of the nature and purpose of the collective action.

The frequency and nature of interaction between the leadership and the people in this phase heavily influence the people's understanding of the organisation. This is reflected in the nature and quality of participation of people, and the degree of co-operation provided by them in the activities initiated by the organisation during the later phases.

3. The Phase of Formalisation

This phase refers to that stage of organisational growth during which the leadership and staff interact with the target group *primarily* through well-designed projects. In case of the product oriented VDOs, the systematic and organised interaction with the people actually starts during this phase. Roles and responsibilities seem to be in the process of being fixed/solidified formally. Two additional collectivities between the leadership and the people emerge formally. They are the project manager/co-ordinator/officers, and the grassroots level workers. Thus a hierarchical and solidified structure of the organisation with fixed roles becomes operational in this phase.

The prominent mode of intervention through projects brings with it not only an opportunity to work with the people but it also brings in new concepts, infrastructure, roles, relationships and patterns of interaction. Project management, project monitoring, and formal reporting become usual components of the organisational work culture. A rigid structure of bottom-up accountability emerges.

The grassroots workers are held accountable to the professionals, the professionals are held accountable to the leadership, and the leadership to the donor agency. The mechanism through which accountability towards the people can be ensured, is largely vague.

Further, the project-based mode of intervention develops a different understanding about this phenomenon among different collectivities. The formation of images of voluntarism is not a one-time phenomenon. It is a continuous process rooted in varying experiences during the course of association with the VDO. In the beginning, the grassroots workers (who belong to the local area) develop a certain degree of emotional attachment and commitment towards the people and their cause. Although they are paid staff, they attach a moral value to the kind of work they are engaged in. They understand that others see their work with respect and reverence. The idea of helping and benefiting others provides them a feeling of self-fulfilling gratification. The assignments are carried out more with a feeling of service rather than a job. Their interaction with the people at the grassroots level goes beyond organisational activities. The target group members share their personal and collective problems with them. The burning issues confronting their village are discussed frequently, and the organisational staff are expected to co-operate in resolving them.

The grassroots workers share these experiences with the target group members and feel the exigency of taking up such issues. They, however, fail to get adequate encouragement and support from the professionals on these issues. The professionals give primacy to the project based responsibilities. Their demands and expectations from the grassroots workers remain confined to the project specific activities. This leads to a process of formation and reformation of meanings. The meanings which a grassroots worker attaches to the VDO seem to be affected by his social background, early expectations, and experiences of formal and informal relationships in the VDO. Repeated neglect of the workers' voice from the leadership and professionals leads to a change in the workers' image of the organisation. Slowly, they start perceiving the VDOs as an organisation catering to the ends of leadership like any other private organisation.

This perception further strengthens, when the workers fail to correlate various inputs and trainings provided to them with their day-to-day activities. They find themselves unable to understand as to how the multiplicity of project-based managerial and technical training inputs will build up their capacity to efficiently play

their role as an agent of social transformation. They find the project-specific demand: too mechanical, routine and boring. They are expected to achieve a fixed target within a specified period of time. They are also involved in a lot of paper work like preparing weekly/monthly progress reports, evaluation reports, filling up different types of forms etc., as in any bureaucratic organisation – government or corporate. From the grassroots workers' perspective, these things hardly address the contextual problems and emerging demands of the people. And the kind of inputs and supports, which they expect from the leadership and the professionals, does not come forth. Consequently, their notion about the VDO as a *private organisation* further strengthens, and they start perceiving themselves as its paid 'employee'.

The professionals, however, perceive this whole process of intervention from different perspective. They have to manage a particular project. The project is meant to achieve a set of objectives within the stipulated time period. They visualise their roles in terms of the project, and make efforts to achieve the project objectives efficiently and effectively. However, their preoccupation with achieving the short-term objectives of the project does not provide enough space to go for other activities, even if they are urgent and significant to the people. They fail to address the highly unpredictable nature of the field, and the emerging needs of the people with which the grassroots workers often struggle during their field visits. Due to their alien background, they lack emotional attachment, and long term commitment with these peripheral needs of the people and the area. They move to another VDO if they find better career prospects. They often discourage the grassroots workers from participating in people's mobilisation. For them, that is not the role of the workers. They are critical of the notion of unstructured 'social service' which according to them creates dependency. However, their professional approach (as perceived by them), which largely treats the people as objects of intervention, fails to notice the attachment of the grassroots workers (who belong to the same area) with the people and the area. They also ignore the fact that it is the moral mental framework of the people, which puts the social service on a high pedestal. *This narrow-minded professionalism discourages the spirit of 'voluntarism' which makes the whole effort instrumental, devoid of any emotional or sentimental attachment to the work.*

The leadership, during this phase, struggles with its own dilemma. On the one hand, all sorts of projects are brought, implemented and justified in the name of people's development and empowerment, and on the other hand they find no

alternative to the approach of professionals, which leads to increasing alienation of the 'people'. Even the leadership is primarily engaged in fulfilling the requirements of the projects, rather than the needs of the people. They identify and recruit qualified professionals to manage and co-ordinate the projects. They have to regularly apprise the donors of the progress in projects. The requirements of projects slowly develop a formal organisational structure, and build up its infrastructural capacity. The managerial, security, and sustainability concerns keep the leadership, away from the field for most of the time. The casual interaction of the leadership with the people remains restricted to the project specific activities. Their direct contact with the people and presence in the field reduce drastically. The idea that the projects are tools for achieving the ultimate goal of bringing about social empowerment and development is hardly understood by the people.

On the people's front, emphasis on project-oriented approach starts developing an understanding about the organisation in terms of the objectives of the project. For example, when a VDO enters with a community health project, the people in general perceive it as a 'health centre' or a 'hospital'. Similarly, if it starts a project on SHG, then they perceive it as the organiser of meetings for collecting money. The gap in the perception of the people, and the idea of the leadership about the projects arises primarily due to inadequate groundwork, deliberations, meetings, and sharing the rationale and purpose of the particular project. It affects the nature and quality of participation. People are more likely to participate in activities where they see some immediate tangible gains, like visiting the health centres for immunisation/medicines, or sending their children to the schools run by the organisation where they get free clothes and other supports. The participation on issues like keeping the surroundings clean, exerting pressure on the government run PHCs to provide prompt services, and persuading the *panchayat* officials to take up the activities in the interest of the whole village community remains low. The people expect the organisational staff to be with them while taking such initiatives, which does not come up due to the latter's preoccupation with the fixed target based, time bound approach of the project.

4. The Phase of Expansion

During the formalisation phase, the organisation develops a formal organisational structure, and strengthens its infrastructural base. This, however, also brings in security and sustenance concerns of the organisation before the leadership. The burden of the project-based activities and the security concerns of the

organisation are cited as major impediments in initiating the organised efforts towards making the organisation self-reliant. Thus, before the completion of a project, the leadership start making efforts to manage some other project(s). Their own time and efforts are consumed in making contacts with 'others', what they term 'networking', and attending various meetings and workshops. They remain busy in convincing the present and potential donors about the need for undertaking some projects in the field area. In the process, they make compromises in the strategy/approach of interventions. The organisation shifts to a new area or takes up a new issue depending upon the priority of the donors. This phase may be termed as the phase of expansion. The intensity of focus on a particular area and issue is considerably diffused.

The phases of formalisation and expansion as discussed above, push the VDOs away from their original mission and vision. There are several reasons for this. First, the vision with which the founder members and the leadership start their mission is not internalised properly by the second line of the organisational hierarchy. This slowly makes their actions instrumental, devoid of voluntary spirit and innovations. Second, the acceptance of funds for new projects according to the priority of the donors may not coincide with the felt and prioritised needs of the target groups, where it has been already working. Consequently, the organisation shifts to a new area and starts afresh. Alternatively, it approaches the old target groups with the projects, which fail to arouse their interests and involvement. In this process, the people fail to draw a clear meaning, and construct a consistent identity of the organisation. Third, although different VDOs initiate the interventions in the field with different modes, they fail to sustain a well planned and conscious efforts to establish a dialogue with all the sections of the village community. The left out sections of the community not only find themselves alienated from the activities of the organisation but also start developing a negative attitude towards them. Even if the leadership realise this limitation, they hardly find any time to pay heed to people's issues due to the administrative and managerial responsibilities of the professionally designed time bound projects, . It leads to the fragmentation of civil society. The inconsistencies and ambiguities were increasingly observed to become similar in both the cases during the formalisation and expansion phases. Table 5.1 summarises some of these findings.

Table 5.1: Inconsistencies between the Organisational and People's Expectations in the Expansion Phase

Collectivities	Expectations from		Degree of Inconsistency	Reasons	Consequences
	the organisation	the people			
Executive Body	To initiate programmes for emancipation of the target group; to ensure people's participation; to build up the capacity of the VDO.	Address the emerging needs of the people; emancipation of the people; spend more time in the field.	Low but growing	Greater attention to project requirements and sustenance of the organisation.	Displacement of goals; diffusion of intensity.
Professionals	To carry out the time bound project activities in the given time framework, training, networking.	Broaden their approach to incorporate the people's needs and expectations; share problems and guide; spend more time in the field.	High	Pressure of the project work as employment; career orientation.	Narrow identity; alienation of the people.
Grassroots Workers	Delivery of project inputs in the field.	To represent people; to raise the real issues of day-to-day life; liaison with the leadership and persuading the leadership to become more responsive to people's needs.	High	Conflicting expectations from the leadership, professionals, and the people.	Demoralisation of the grassroots workers; role conflict; ambiguity; and stress.
People	To avail the benefits ensured by the projects; to actively participate in the project activities.	To resolve the community problems in a holistic manner through sustainable organisations of the people.	Conflicting paradigms of action	Lack of participation in deciding the priorities; fragmentation of civil society.	Alienation; suspicion; conflicts.

Table 5.1 clearly indicates that the expansion phase is associated with a high degree of inconsistencies between the organisational expectations (as perceived by the leadership and the professionals) and the people's expectations. These inconsistencies in different dimensions create ambiguities in roles and relationships. The interactions with the target group become mechanical. The original vision and mission of the VDO slowly recedes to the background due to preoccupation with the projects and the sustenance of the organisation.

It may be noted that during the expansion phase, the shift to a new area in some cases may involve abandoning the old areas of operation. It might be done either under a pre-planned strategy or under some compulsions. One may refer to this process of withdrawal of the VDO from a particular field area, as the *phase of withdrawal*.

5.4 MAJOR IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

In this study, we have used the model proposed by Billis to theorise the voluntary sector. Yet, in the light of the professed aims of voluntarism, some modifications were made in the model. The new model assumed that as an ideal type, VDOs include the *people* as an integral part, in all the organisational processes. This, study shows that the inclusion of people introduces multidimensional inconsistencies and ambiguities. These ambiguities are not limited to role specifications (as pointed out by Billis), but they can also be observed in the nature and mode of intervention, the internal interactions, and the interactions with the people. It highlights the existing dilemmas and conflicts in the voluntary sector that demands further conceptual clarity. The inconsistencies and dilemmas become increasingly similar in both the cases during the phase of formalisation and expansion. In these phases, the mode of intervention seems to be governed more by the institutional factors rather than the needs of the people. The associational characteristics are overshadowed by the bureaucratic norms. In the light of the findings of this study, the remodified framework is shown in Figure 5.1. It may be noted that the space of AVDOs has a tendency to shift towards the space of bureaucracy. This is associated with a parallel reduction in the space of associations, particularly the space of informal association. This shift towards uniformity poses a serious challenge for addressing the problems of plurality of the civil society.

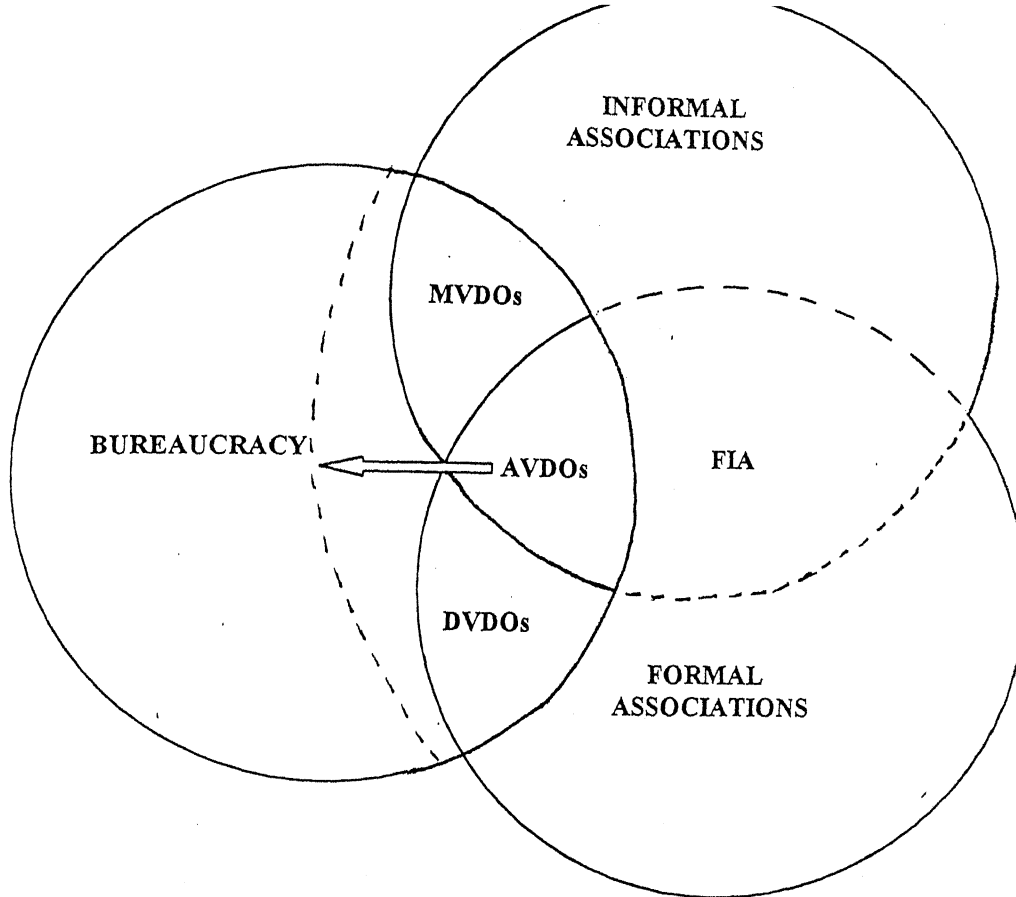


Fig. 5.1: The Remodified Framework

Second, the import of externally designed tools and concepts for bringing about social change and development, and their unqualified implementation in the field area leads to the fragmentation of civil society, and the alienation of people. They restrict the space for manoeuvring and, constantly, the mode of intervention becomes more or less similar. This questions the assumption that amongst AVDOs, there are two distinct categories of VDOs. At the most, the distinctiveness is visible only during the first two phases, which does not last for long.

The emergence of VDOs owes to both the voluntaristic-individual and deterministic-structural elements. On the one hand they ensure an individual's choice to promote development in the voluntaristic framework, on the other the demands from the civil society (apart from the failures and limitations of the state and the market) create the need for new institutions and agencies. Interestingly, these two factors predominate the decisions on the kind of interventions to be made in the field area. However, besides the perception of the leadership or/and the requirements of the

state or donors, the people's own prioritised needs play a crucial role in ensuring the quality of their participation. When the perceived needs of the target groups match with the requirements of the projects launched by the VDO, the people support the interventions. It paves the way for mobilisation, and active participation in the organisational activities. The arena of voluntary action in such a context becomes a public sphere, where the *people* as such, come and join the process, whether they agree with it or not. This mode of intervention requires sufficient space to accommodate ground level uncertainties. It also demands adequate time, and a broader interaction space from all the four collectivities. As argued by Holmen and Magnus (1994) there is a need for creating an organisational space where VDOs can find the necessary manoeuvring room to respond to local needs has been also highlighted by

The lack of such space and restricting the efforts strictly within the boundaries of a project act as major impediments in participative voluntarism. The development of people is an on-going process and cannot be time-bound or target oriented, and squeezed in one financial year (Roy, 1989). The shift towards the project bound activities heavily reduces the space for interaction with the people. It becomes more focussed and narrow. In this mode of intervention, the other peripheral needs of civil society that arise from time to time pass unaddressed. Consequently, the people are alienated from the activities of the VDO. This project based *particularism* leads to the fragmentation of the civil society. The inconsistencies and ambiguities in the nature and mode of intervention compel the target groups and the grassroots workers to deconstruct the meanings of the VDO.

Emphasis on projects, makes the VDO appear like a private venture started by the leadership and the paid organisational staff in their own interest. People perceive it as 'their' (i.e. the leadership or the organisational staff's) work and not as 'our' work. This leads to the issue of institutional sustainability of VDOs. The lack of focus on sustainability within NGOs has emerged as one of the major problems of the development process (Schmale, 1993). The task of defining and maintaining a viable working relationship with community groups poses a dilemma for many intermediary institutions. The most serious disincentive to community participation and activity is discontinuity in projects and programmes initiated by external agencies (Lee, 1998).

The role of founder leaders and Chief Functionaries of VDOs needs critical re-evaluation. In the process of ensuring security and sustenance concerns of the

organisation, the needs of civil society recedes into the backdrop. Their efforts to build up the capacity of civil society remain confined to building the capacity of the 'organisation.' The institutional sustainability of VDOs demands a wider role from the leadership. Like Tandon & Veronica (1999), we argue that the leadership should go beyond mere assembling of financial or human resource for the organisation, and should take responsibility in strengthening the governance mechanism. The internal policy making, and governing practices appear to be guided more by adhocism rather than a plan or strategy. On some occasions they are casual, while on others they become strictly rule bound. The whole internal process of leadership selection is strictly limited to only one collectivity. Gordenker (1997) cautions against this simplified practice of the leadership selection by appointing acquaintances and co-opting successors.

The processes of formalisation and expansion slowly make the actions of functionaries instrumental, devoid of voluntaristic innovations and creativity. It brings in the issue of how to manage the organisational change. The increased functional specialisation between parts of the organisation and extension of hierarchy that separate those who manage the organisation from those who manage field operation, make the approach more focussed. However, the people bring in multiplicity of needs, and have their own constructions of the 'future'. VDOs as civil society functionaries should have enough space to address the diversities and pluralities existing among the people. The civil society assigns values to certain social actions. For example, in the Indian context, the rural masses in general conceive any action that benefits 'others' as a 'service' and assign high value to them. However, simultaneously, they also expect some behavioural norms from all those who are actively engaged in such activities. The *professional particularism*, which aims to enhance the efficiency and effectivity of VDOs strictly through the project-based mode of intervention seems to ignore such norms and values. It also adversely affects the motivation and commitment of the grassroots workers. Ahmed (1998) also points out that shift of organisational culture from task oriented to role oriented, increasing top-down control, and professionalism subordinates commitment and mission related values. Instrumental considerations rather than ideologies become primary (Panini, 1999). However, Bava (1997) argues that as a dynamic organ of civil society, the NGOs owe moral, ethical and social accountability to the society in which they operate. The 'professional' tools, skills and appliances should be demystified, and be given the

human touch. Consequently, the people develop a narrow understanding about the purpose of voluntarism. *Ambiguities, dilemmas, and conflicts associated with the voluntary development sector are thus manifested in different dimensions of action. The issues related to the concept and the practice of professionalism versus voluntarism, particularistic versus universalistic approach, and the project-oriented versus process-oriented mode of intervention, require an innovative approach to resolve them.*

On the practical front, this study has some implications for the policy makers, the VDOs, and all those who are involved with them. The VDOs, if they aim to strengthen the civil society, must relate their activities with the capacity building of the people in terms of the prioritised components decided by the people. Since it may demand a lot of manoeuvring, it is imperative to have enough space for it. Excessive or total dependence on external funding heavily guards against any such initiative. It is commonly accepted that because of their poverty, and need to pay their staff, they often have to compromise with what they consider to be the right approach. Instead they do what the donors want or what there is money available for (Mencher, 1999). A careful and comprehensive thinking must be exercised from the beginning to make them self-reliant. This will arrest the tendency of abruptly changing their field area and objectives of intervention. It will also provide them enough space to address the needs of the people, and strengthen their credibility. This requires a long-term perspective. The donors and other supporters must realise the importance of having this long-term perspective.

The concept of strengthening the civil society merely by providing training inputs to the staff, or fulfilling infrastructural requirements of the organisation, pushes the people away from the focus of attention. Even the training inputs provided to the staff fail to deliver the expected results. Further, better co-ordination should be achieved among the different types of training given to the staff at different points of time. Multiple training inputs in diverse areas do not serve any long-term purpose. The impact of training should be evaluated in terms of the practicability of its application in the field and sequential requirements of the trainees.

Efforts that raise the participation, the involvement and co-operation of the people, must be given the topmost priority. The presence of professionals and the leadership in the field leaves a positive impact on the people. Each programme and project should contribute towards the self-sufficiency of the organisation. For this, the

people must be allowed to exercise the right to evaluate the performance of the organisation according to their own indicators. Otherwise, shadowing the role of the people in decision making, auditing, and evaluating the performance of the work done by the organisation, would render it nothing more than a private sphere of action limited to a few people. Of course there may be some successful cases here and there, depending upon the leadership quality or other local factors, but what is lacking is the organisation of the whole process of social change and development through voluntarism.

5.5 FUTURE RESEARCH

At the end of this study, we feel that we require some methodological and substantive changes in the researches on VDOs in India. Some of them are as follows:

1. Perceptions of donors and their philosophy of action are very important constituents of grassroots action initiated by VDOs. However, even after repeated attempts, we couldn't get any response from the donors to whom the questionnaire was mailed. We also could not get response from some of the executive body members whom we contacted through mail.
2. Originally we had planned to conduct some Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercises to get an idea about the prioritised needs of the people's groups and the alternative ways and means to fulfil them. This, however, could not be accomplished because of non-fulfilment of certain prerequisites to carry out these exercises. For example, the efficient implementation of these tools for data generation requires assistance of two to three persons in the field along with the researcher. Further, it also requires presence of the members from all the four collectivities at one place at a time for cross-checking of facts.
3. The grassroots action initiated by the VDOs is heavily influenced and regulated by the dynamics of the local state agencies, market forces and the village community. To develop an adequate theory of VDOs, in the future a researcher should not only include in the ambit of the study the banks, development officials, co-operatives, cottage industries, local traders and markets, but also contact the other sections of the village community that are not the target groups of the VDO.

4. Generating reliable qualitative data in a rural setup demands a proper rapport with the people. It demands a good amount of the researcher's time to be spent in the field before going in for data generation. We feel that to study a VDO active in rural areas, it is necessary to spend at least a year's time. It will be helpful in developing a comprehensive understanding of the nature of participation and interaction of people with the other collectivities of VDOs
5. A study of VDOs needs to develop research tools, which could minimise the unnecessary suspicion and scepticism on the part of the people and the community level workers and unearth the facts and perspectives unobtrusively.
6. Does the relationship between the community based organisations (CBOs) and VDOs mutually affect the capacity of each other? How can this help in addressing the felt needs of the people? How does it affect the organisational structure and relationships, interactions among the various levels of organisational hierarchy, the issue of accountability, and the problem of security and sustenance? These are some other important issues, which deserve researcher's attention for a more holistic understanding of VDOs.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE VDO

A. General Information

1. Name of the VDO
2. Year of establishment
3. Year of registration
4. The name of the Act under which the VDO is registered.
5. Whether the VDO is independent/ affiliated/ federated to some other organisation/body? If yes, to which organisation/body?
6. Whether the VDO is a member of some network/association? If yes, which network/association is this?
7. Is this a branch of national or state level agency? If yes, which agency?
8. Geographical area of operations
 - i. District.
 - ii. Block/s.
 - iii. Villages (no.)

B. Profile of the projects/programmes/activities implemented by the VDO

1. Year/ date on which the programme started.
2. Name of the programme.
3. Targets/Objectives
4. Area of operation.
5. Target Group(s).
6. Year in which the programme was stopped.
7. Reasons for stopping the programme.
8. Source of funds and quantum of funds
 - i. Foreign
 - ii. Indian
 - iii. Self
9. Any other organisation (governmental/non-governmental) collaborated in the

programme.

9.1 Nature of the collaboration

10. Three major organisational strengths and three major organisational weaknesses relevant for the success of the programme.

D. Chronological details of the major issues on which the VDO has focussed till date.

E. Detail Organisational Chart

Category of Staff	Designation	Job Description	Total No.

SOURCE : Office Secretary/Secretary

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE SELECTED VILLAGES

1. Infrastructural Base {with the year of establishment/construction}

i. Road: metal *Kuccha* No proper road

ii. Source of drinking water

	Name	Owner	No.
--	------	-------	-----

iii. Means of irrigation

	Name	Owner	No.
--	------	-------	-----

iv. (a) Nearest PHC

	Name	Distance
--	------	----------

(b) Nearest Referral Hospital

v. Electricity Supply

	Yes/No	Year
--	--------	------

vi) Nearest

	Name	Distance	Year
--	------	----------	------

a. Primary school

b. Middle school

c. High school

d. College

e. Adult Education Centre or

Non Formal Education Centre

vii) Nearest post office

	Distance	Year
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viii) Nearest Bank

ix) Nearest Bus/Tempo stand

x) Nearest Railway station

xi) Nearest Telephone facility

xii) Nearest Market

a. Regular

b. Local

xiii) Any industry/firm/cottage industry/co-operatives

xiv) Shops {Blacksmith, carpenter, potter, goldsmith, cobbler, barber, washerman, grossary, tailor etc.}

xv) Panchayat Building

	Distance	Year
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xvi) Community Centre

xvii) Nearest Court

2. Demographic Profile

i. Population

Male Female Total

a. Caste

- Scheduled Castes (SCs)
- Scheduled Tribes (STs)
- Other Backward Castes (OBCs)
- Others

b. Religion

- HINDU
- MUSLIMS
- Others

ii. Literacy

Male Female Total

a. Caste

- Scheduled Castes
- Scheduled Tribes
- Other Backward Castes
- Others

b. Religion

- HINDU
- MUSLIMS
- Others

iii) Health Status

SC ST OBC HINDU MUSLIMS Others

a. Infant Mortality Rate

b. Family Size

c. Maternal Mortality Rate

d. Couple Protection Rate

iv) Major Occupation (caste-wise & religion-wise)

v) Migration.

3. Resource Base

i) Land

Agricultural Non-Agricultural Wasteland Total

ii) Forest Cover

iii) Human Resource
Skilled

Specifications

Unskilled

iv) Any industry/firms etc

v) Rivers/canals/ponds/wells/etc.

vi)Others.

***SOURCE : Office/Block/District/Through PRA Exercises with the
community/Discussions with some key persons.***

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE CHIEF FUNCTIONARIES

(A) Personal Information about the Executive Body Members

1. Age & Sex							
2. Nationality							
3. Religion							
4. Caste							
5. Class (Income/month)							
6. Source of Income							
7. Education							
8. Main Occupation							
9. No. of family members							
10. Their occupation (if in college)							
11. Association with the agency (in years)							
12. Nature of work at present							
13. Hours of work (per month)							
14. Facilities provided by the VDO							

1. How did the idea of forming/joining the VDO come to your mind?
2. What roles you have performed in the VDO?
3. What is the mechanism of communicating the roles/responsibilities assigned to you in the organisation?
4. How do you evaluate your performance?
5. Do you think that the VDO is proceeding on the right track or not?
- 5.1 Why do you think so?

(B) Issues related to the history, philosophy, & nature of the VDO

- 1) What was the context in which the VDO emerged?

(Probe whether there was any particular social, economic, political, or any particular situation in which the VDO emerged?)

- 1.1 Was any benchmark survey done before forming the VDO or not? Please specify.
- 1.2 Why do you think that there was a need for a new institution?

- 1.3 Do you think that the purpose for which the VDO was established, could have been achieved by other contemporary institutions, viz., governmental/ non-governmental/ people's association, or not? Why do you think so?
- 2) What was the first project/programme launched by the VDO?
 - 2.1 Why did you start with this project/programme?
 - 2.2 In your opinion, do you think that there was/were other better option/s or way to enter into the community or not? Probe.
3. Would you tell us about the major steps usually followed, from the beginning of the project till its completion?
4. What is the philosophy/ideology of the VDO?
 - 4.1 How far do you think that this philosophy/ideology has been reflected in various activities of the VDO? Probe.
5. Please mention major strong points about your VDO as compared to other voluntary organisations working in U.P. Why do you think so?
6. Please mention major challenges before the VDO. What effort(s) have been made to tackle them ?
7. Please mention prominent weaknesses of the VDO. What steps have you taken to overcome them?

(C) Administration & Management

I) Work Culture in the VDO

1. Every VDO requires some regular activities to be performed. The activities may either be distributed in a fixed and formal way as official duties or may be assigned in flexible and informal way as and when required. In this regard what is the policy in your VDO?
 - 1.1 Do you give a written job description to your staff or you have some other mechanism? What are the possible reasons for this?
 - 1.2 If job description is not fixed and formalised, what is the procedure of deciding the job/work assignment at various hierarchical levels of organisational structure?
 - 1.3 Do you have some minimum, regular expectations from your staff or there is no such fixed criteria? How do you communicate them to the staff?
2. What are the qualities and competencies you prefer for making a division among the staffs at same hierarchical level and in the case of staffs at different levels hierarchy?
3. A number of arguments and counter-arguments are usually given for and against subjecting the officials to strict and systematic discipline and control in the conduct of his office. What norms do you follow in your VDO? What sort of problems do they create? How do you tackle them?

4. What type of formal rules & regulations are existing to manage the organisational affairs?
5. Usually the organisation of offices follows the principle of hierarchy, i.e., each lower office is under the control and supervision of a higher one. What is the system in your VDO?
6. In India it has been widely observed that the subordinates are usually subjected to authority (directly/indirectly; formally/informally) in relation to fulfilling personal obligations apart from fulfilling their official obligations. In this regard, would you tell us about the situation in your VDO?
- 6.1 Would you tell us the usual task/work for which the subordinates approach to the authority? Probe.
7. What is the procedure of selection of staffs and the nature of their appointment ? How does it affects their overall work performance?
8. What system of promotion or giving other incentives and facilities to your staff is existing in the VDO?

II) Decision Making

1. To run the organisational affairs smoothly and efficiently, certain decisions are usually taken. These decisions may be of routine type or urgent and exigent. In this regard I would like to know the type of decisions usually taken to run the day to day organisational affairs. At what level are the decisions taken?
2. Do you feel that the existing mode of decision making is appropriate or there is need for some modifications in it? Probe.

III) Co-operation & Commitment

1. How far the co-operative behaviour is reflected among the staff members and between staff and volunteers?
 - 1.1 Could you narrate some situations in which the staff members showed the highest co-operation and other where they showed least co-operation?
2. How far volition and commitment as part of the workers and volunteers is reflected in their work? Why do you think so?

(D) Leadership Issue

1. Who are the persons in your opinion, giving the first line leadership to the VDO at present?
2. Usually, to run an organisation smoothly and efficiently, leadership has to take many decisions. Who are the persons, primarily involved by the leadership in taking decisions on the following issues (to be asked separately):
 - i) Mobilisation of financial resources for the VDO;
 - ii) Selection of staff;
 - iii) Selection of volunteers;

- iv) Coordination with the local bureaucracy;
 - v) Networking and associating with other agencies;
 - vi) Proper training of the staff;
 - vii) Selection of the programmes/projects;
 - viii) Searching proper outlets for the products/persons trained in the VDO;
 - ix) Any intra-organisational issue/problem; and
 - x) Others (if any).
3. The success or failure of any organisation to a large extent, depends on the quality of its leadership. You have been associated with the VDO for a long period. How do you evaluate the leadership provided to the VDO till date?
4. What changes do you observe in the nature and quality of leadership, since the establishment of the VDO?
5. What is your perception regarding the leadership style in the VDO? Why do you think so?
6. In your opinion what are the major strengths of the leadership of the VDO?
- 6.1 Would you support your arguments with suitable examples?
7. In your opinion, what are the major weaknesses of the leadership?
- 7.1 Would you support your arguments with suitable examples?
8. In your opinion what are the major challenges before the present leadership ?
- 8.1 What measures are being taken to tackle them?
- 8.2 In your opinion, what other measures should be taken to tackle them? (Probe)
9. The importance and need for developing an effective second line leadership has been emphasised time and again, to ensure a sustainable leadership to the VDO. Has your VDO evolved some policies in this regard or not? If yes, please specify them.
10. What are your personal expectations from the leadership?
11. Keeping in mind the nature of the VDO, would you favour an individual leadership or group leadership? Why do you think so?
12. Ensuring proper flow of resources is must for any VDO. However there is the crucial issue of self-reliance and '*Gram Swarajya*'. In this backdrop, what are the personal responsibility of the leadership in your opinion?
- 12.1 What role do you see for leadership to ensure other's participation in resource mobilisation?
- 12.2 Please tell about the actual situation in this regard?
13. Now we would like to know about the nature of relationship between the leadership on one hand and others.

- 13.1 What is the system of formal meetings between the leadership and the community? What are the usual agenda in these meetings?
- 13.2 What is the system of formal meetings between the leadership and the volunteers? What are the usual agenda in these meetings?
- 13.3 meetings between the leadership and the staff? What are the usual agenda in these meetings?
- 13.4 What is the system of formal meetings between the leadership and the executive body members? What are the usual agenda in these meetings?
14. Could you mention any special effort/s on the part of the leadership to encourage and ensure the participation and inculcate leadership traits among the hitherto alienated groups/class, viz., women, SC/OBCs, youths or others underprivileged groups?

(E) On Participation

1 In your opinion, whose participation is usually ensured at different steps (as mentioned below) during the life span project:

	Need Identification	Planning	Implement- ation	Monitoring	Evaluation
1. Donors					
2. Government Agencies					
3. Community					
4. Staff					
5. Volunteers					
6. Local leaders					
7. Othe Key Persons					

{On the basis of the response, further clarification can be sought if some important actors are missing somewhere or some other actors are visible everywhere}.

- 1.1 Mention the nature of participation by each of the above actors at each of the five steps mentioned above. Support the argument with specific examples.
2. What are the problems generally faced, in ensuring people's active participation?
3. On the basis of your experience in the VDO, how does the participation affect the organisational performance?
4. In your opinion in which way the participation of each of the above actors can be ensured at each of the above steps?
- 4.1 Why do you think so?
- 4.2 What are the problems in ensuring their participation?
5. Can you narrate at least two situations from your VDO where the participation of all the key actors was ensured and also where the level of participation was poor? What were the reasons behind it?

(F) On Capacity Building

1. Programme/Project Management Capacity

- 1.1 What is the usual process of making a project proposal?
- 1.2 Who are the persons usually involved in making the proposals?
- 1.3 Do you sometime take help from some outsiders in making project proposals or not? If yes, who are they?
- 1.4 What is the usual mechanism of implementing a project?
- 1.5 What is the usual mechanism of monitoring a project?
- 1.6 Do you have trained manpower to design, implement and monitor the projects through participatory rural appraisal (PRA) or not? If yes, have you ever designed, implemented, monitored, and evaluated a project through PRA methods or not? Please give some examples.
- 1.7 Have you ever felt that the VDO has excess workload and it is difficult to manage? If yes, could you cite some cases?

1.7.1 Do you think, such a situation is frequent/normal/rare?

2. Human Resource Development Capacity

{Questions on the capacity of the VDO's ability to recruit new and appropriate human resources have been covered in the previous section}

- 2.1 Whom does the VDO consider as its human resource?
- 2.2 What policy(ies) do you have regarding inservice training and orientation of the human resource?
- 2.3 How do you evaluate the performance of the personnel?
- 2.4 What system do you have for compensaton and reward?
- 2.5 How do you assess the developmental needs and provision for the personnel?
- 2.6 Does the VDO have any mechanism to build up the group feeling among the staff? If yes, please tell us about it.

3. Systems Capacity

- 3.1 How do you manage the system of financial management and accounts keeping?
- 3.2 The personnel management systems {already covered}
- 3.3 What kind of legal/statutory requirements your VDO is supposed to fulfil?
How do you manage it?
- 3.4 What is the decision-making system related to the projects and programmes, do you have in your VDO?

4. Infrastructural Capacity

- 4.1 Chronologically list the assets viz. buildings, training centre, project centres, extension centres, vehicles, agricultural and related machinery or office equipments etc.
- 4.2 How do you manage their regular maintenance, efficient utilisation, periodical renewal?
- 4.3 In your opinion what is the situation mobilisation of financial resources for long term sustainability?

5. Information Capacity

- 5.1 What is the system for the documentation of information and its of storage and retrieval?

6. Relational Capacity

- 6.1 Comment on the nature and extent of relationship with some network of other individual VDOs, government departments and agencies.
- 6.2 Does the VDO have any long term vision and plan, in this regard or not? If yes, what is that?
- 6.3 In the life span of the VDO, has it restructured its positions and roles in response to emerging trends and changes or not? If yes, please tell us about it.

7. Renewal Capacity

- 7.1 Do you feel that the VDO has ever committed some mistakes in its approach or strategy or has taken some wrong decisions on certain occasions or not? If yes, please tell us about it?
 - 7.1.2. What steps did the VDO take to ensure no such mistakes in the future?
- 7.2 Since its establishment, does the VDO has made some; (a) internal and external restructuring, (b) reformulation of mission, (c) reformulation of strategy, (d) revitalisation of culture, and (e) reorientation of leaders?
 - 7.2.1 If yes, please tell us more about it.

(G) Resource Mobilisation & Accountability

1. Mobilisation of various types of resources is one of the most important activities for any VDO to sustain itself. Please mention and priorities the type of resources mobilised by the VDO to run its activities smoothly.
2. What are the major sources of resources (of each type)?
3. What policies do you follow while mobilising resources?
4. Once the resources have been arranged and utilised, do you have to account for them or not?
 - 4.1 If yes, to whom do you account for them?

4.2 What is the mechanism of accounting?

5. Is there any role of the target groups in the auditing process or not? If yes, what is that?
6. Who are the persons/personnel primarily responsible for mobilising and handling the resources?
7. Did you ever face a situation where the lack/shortage of resources (any type) become an acute problem for the VDO or not?
 - 7.1 Could you give some instances/situations of such problem/s?
 - 7.2 What was the final outcome?
8. What are the major difficulties in resource generation?
9. There are VDOs, which are totally against the foreign funding and many of them oppose the acceptance of state funding also. Do you have any policy on this issue or not? If yes, what is that?

(H) On Relationship With Others

I. The "organisation - people"

1. A common problem which many VDOs are facing today, is the lack of people's active participation in their activities. What is the situation in the context of your VDO? Probe.
2. In which type of activities do you get maximum support and active participation of the people? Why is it so?
3. In which type of activities do you get least support and participation of the people? Why is it so?
4. A common argument against the VDOs is that they have been formed and run by the people which are not a part and parcel of the community. What do you think about it with reference to your VDO?
5. In your opinion what is the identity/image of the VDO among the people?
6. In your opinion, What are the major strong points of the VDO in its relationship with the people?
7. Which aspects of the project draw maximum attention of the people?
8. In your opinion, what are the major weaknesses of the VDO in its relationship with the community? How do you plan to overcome them?
10. Do people approach the VDO on their own or not? If yes, for which purpose do they approach most frequently? If not, why not?
 - 10.1 In this regrd do you see any change in the trend since the establishment of the VDO or not? If yes, what is it?
11. Which type of people approach you most frequently and what is their purpose?

12. Is there any activity which is not a part of your VDO's formal responsibility but which has been accomplished with the active participation and support of the people? If yes, please mention that.
13. Mention the name of the activities/projects/programmes (if any) for which people directly approached the local government agencies on your initiative/ direction.
 - 13.1 What was the outcome?
 - 13.2 What was the earlier trend, in this regard?
 - 13.3 Could you cite some cases to support your argument?
14. Please elaborate the nature of people's association that were existing in the field area before the establishment of the VDO.
 - 14.1 What kind of people's association have been formed on the organisation's initiative?
 - 14.2 Could you mention the type of problems/issues which these association have taken up, on their own? What was the result?
 - 14.3 What type of training inputs (if any) have been given to them?
 - 14.4 Did the VDO supply any other input/s to strengthen their overall efforts to improve upon their existing condition or not? If yes, what are they? If not, why not?
15. What efforts do the associations make on their own to strengthen their own capability to solve their problems or not?

II. The VDO and the state

1. Mention the type of activities for which you usually collaborate with the various government agencies.
2. Can you mention any issue on which the VDO faced some problems in the relationship with the concerned department? What was the nature of the crisis? How was it resolved?
3. What are the programmes/projects/activities through which the VDO is associated with the government agencies at the field level?
 - 3.1 In what way, this relationship with the state has contributed to the overall efforts of the VDO in achieving its objectives or not?

III. Market and the VDO

1. Does any of your activity/programme is such where the VDO has to directly interact with the market or not? If yes, what is it?
 - 1.1 What is the nature of interaction with the market?
2. It is being argued that the market has been primarily engaged in encouraging the culture of over-consumerism and materialism. In this context many VDOs are

engaged in emphasising the need for a proper regard to some basic human values. What has been the approach and policy of your VDO in this regard?

2.1 In this context, what sort of challenges your VDO is facing at the grassroots level?

2.2 What has been your strategies and policies to tackle these challenges?

3. Any incident/issue which you would like to share regarding the relationship between the market and the VDO?

IV. The Donors and the VDO

1. Would you explain chronologically with respect to each of the project/programmes, as to who approached the other i.e. whether it was you, which first approached first to the donors for the funds or it was the donors who approached first to the organisation for giving funds?

S.No.	Name of the Project	The Organisation	The Donor

2. On what basis do you accept funds from a particular donor?

3. Have you ever rejected some proposals from the donors or not? If yes, what were the reasons for rejection?

4. What type of problems do you usually face with the donors from which you have accepted funds?

5. The issue of dependency on external agents for funding has been seen by many as one of the biggest impediments in making the community/the field self-reliant and also for the long-term sustainability of the VDO's efforts. In this regard, how do you evaluate the performance of your VDO?

6. Mention the name of some activities/programme (if any) for which you wanted to get some funds from the donors but could not get the fund.

6.1 What was the reason for that?

7. Is there any donor from which you accepted funds in the past but due to some reasons you have decided not to accept fund from that particular donor in future? If yes, what was the reason behind that?

8. Have you ever faced some problems with the donors regarding your ideology or programme or not? If yes, what problems did you face? How did you resolve them?

V. Other VDOs & the VDO Under Study

1. Name the VDOs which have worked in this area in past or are working at present.

2. Does your VDO have implemented some programmes/activities in collaboration

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with them or is there any example where your VDO has co-operated with them in some way or not? If yes, please tell us more about it. If not, why not?

3. Is there any case, where your VDO and any other VDO have worked in the same village or not?

3.1 If yes, name the programme which you were/are implementing.

3.2 What is your experience in such a case?

3.3 How does the community react, when two or more VDOs reach their village with same or different programmes?

3.4 Do you think that it creates some sort of confusion /doubts in the community or it does not create any confusion? If yes, why do you think so?

4. Have you ever approached any other local VDOs of this area or not?

4.1 If yes, what was your purpose?

4.2 If no, why not?

5. Did any local VDO also approach you or not? If yes, what for did it approach ?

6. Any situation, when the VDOs of this area have jointly approached the local state agencies with relation to some common problem of this area or not?

6.1 If yes, what was the issue?

6.2 What was the outcome of such an attempt?

7. Does your VDO constitute a part of some association/network?

7.1 If yes, tell us more about it.

7.2 How it has affected the overall performance and identity of your VDO?

{Each argument should be dually supported by authentic examples and must be cross checked}.

Appendix IV

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE EXECUTIVE BODY MEMBERS

(In case of insufficient space, you may use the backside of the page)

- 1) What is the philosophy of your VDO?
 - 1.1) Does your VDO believe in advocate some ideology?
 - 1.1.1) If yes, please tell us about that?
- 2) What the broad aims and objectives of your VDO?
- 3) What are your major source/s of funding?
- 4) What roles does your VDO see for grassroots voluntary development organisations in the contemporary context?
 - 4.1) Do you think that grassroots voluntary development organisations should work as a channel for meeting various needs of the target group through well designed projects or they should become an effective source of mobilisation?
 - 4.1.1) Why do you think so?
- 5) Do you have any priority area (both issue wise and geographical region wise) on the basis of which you fund a particular project in a specific region? If yes, please tell us about it.
- 6) What is the usual criteria and procedure adopted, in the selection of a voluntary development organisation for funding?
- 7) Why did you select people's Action for National Integration (PANI) as your partner?
- 8) What is the usual procedure for identifying a particular project/programme for which you provide funds to a VDO?

Appendix V

STAFF INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

I GENERAL

1. Since how long have you been associated with this VDO?
2. Are you also a formal member of the VDO? Yes/No
3. In what way(s) have you been benefited by the VDO?
4. (a) Are you associated with other agencies also at present? Yes/No
(b) If yes, please specify the agency and type of association.
5. Please describe your experience of voluntary work before joining this VDO.
6. (a) Please list the type of work you have been doing since you joined this VDO.
(b) Please give us the details of the work you are doing at present.
7. Please tell us how many hours you devote to this work?
----- Hours per day/week/month
8. Considering the work you are doing and time you are devoting, do you think that you
Yes/No
 - (a) can take new responsibility;
 - (b) would like to give up some of the responsibilities;
 - (c) can devote more time;
 - (d) would like to devote lesser time;
 - (e) would like to carry on as you do;
- 8.1 Why do you think so?
9. (a) Do you think that services with which you are associated have improved through your contribution?
Yes/No

(b) If yes, in what way?

II SELECTION AND PLACEMENT

10. How did you come to know about the VDO?

Please give details

- (a) Through a member of the Executive Committee
- (b) Through a member of the paid staff
- (c) Through another voluntary organisation
- (d) Through advertisement in newspapers
- (e) Any other

11. (a) Did you face any interview/discussion, before joining this organisation?

Yes/No

(b) If yes, please describe the nature of interview/discussion in terms of,

i) information you got about the organisation and your work.

ii) information which the organisation sought from you.

12. Do you consider the information you had about the VDO and your assignment before taking up work was

- (a) Sufficient
- (b) Partially Sufficient
- © Insufficient

13. On what basis did the leadership offer you to join the organisation?

14. (a) Now you have worked for sometime in the organisation, do you think that it really suits to your interest?

Yes/No

(b) Please explain, why?

15. Do you face any problem due to

Yes/No

- (a) the amount of the time to be devoted in your work,
- (b) the timings of the organisation,
- (c) the duration of the assignment,

(d) the expenses incurred during the work,

(e) any other

16. (a) Do you think your agency has helped you in overcoming these difficulties?

Yes/No

(b) If yes, in what ways?

(c) If no, in what way can it help you?

III FACILITIES TO THE STAFF

17. Do you think that a staff should be provided,

Yes/No

i) some additional allowance to compensate the expenses incurred during the working hours?

ii) some extra facilities?

17.1 Why do you think so?

18. Does your agency pay/provide you

Yes/No

i) some additional allowance to compensate the expenses incurred during the working hours?

ii) some extra facilities?

(If yes, please specify)

19. (a) What other rewards do you receive from the organisation, in recognition of your work?

(b) Can you suggest some better ways of giving recognition to the staff?

20. (a) Is your work supervised by some one in the organisation?

Yes/No

(b) If yes, by whom and what is the nature of supervision?

21. (a) Does this supervision help you?

Yes/No/N.A

(b) If yes, in what way(s)?

(c) If no, why not?

22. (a) Do you supervise anyone in the agency?

Yes/No

(b) If yes, whom and what is the nature of supervision?

23. (a) Do you face any problems in the supervisor-supervisee relationship?

Yes/No

(b) If yes, what are those?

IV RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VOLUNTEERS AND THE PAID STAFF

24. What are the most important problems you have experienced in the relationship between the staff and the staff and between the staff and the volunteers?

25. (a) Are you governed by any rules, regulations, and code of conduct in the organisation?

Yes/No

(b) If yes, what are these about?

(c) How were these communicated to you?

26. (a) Do you find these rules, regulations and codes too demanding or reasonable?

(b) Please give reasons

27. (a) If there are no rules and regulations do you think it desirable to have them? Yes/No

(b) If yes, please tell us what these rules, regulations and code of conduct should relate to.

V MOTIVATION AND LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

28. Can you please tell us what are the reasons in your case to have taken up job in voluntary sector?

29. Can you please tell us whether any other member(s) of your family has been associated with voluntary work?

Yes/No

(a) If yes, please give a brief account of his/her work.

30. (a) All members have certain expectations in terms of satisfaction from their work. Now that you have worked in the agency for some time, do you find your work in the agency:

- Highly satisfying
- Satisfying
- Just alright
- Not satisfying
- Highly unsatisfying

(b) Please give reasons

31. If you do not find your work satisfying can you suggest some changes in the approach of the agency which would ensure greater satisfaction?

Yes/No

i) If yes, what is that?

ii) If no, why not?

32. Could you tell us the attitude of your clients towards your work?

32.1 How do you feel about it?

33. It is seen that people's interest in voluntary work undergoes certain changes over a period of time. What have you to say about your interest since you joined the agency?

Reasons

i) Declining

ii) Constant

iii) Increasing

34. (a) Do you think that staffs like you should be associated with policymaking process?

Yes/No

(b) If yes, how?

i) Should be consulted by Boards and Committees.

ii) Should be members of Boards and Committees.

(c) If no, why not?

35. If you feel that staffs should be members of Boards and Committees, do you think it is possible for you to become one? Please give reasons.

36. What according to you are the ideal conditions for work in a voluntary agency?

VII TRAINING

37. (a) Have you received any training for the work you are doing in the organisation?

Yes/No

(b) If yes, please describe the nature, duration, and the place of training.

(c) Did you find this training useful?

Yes/No/N.A.

i) If yes, in what way?

38. (a) If you have not received any training so far, would you like to undergo one?

Yes/No

(b) If yes, what do you think should be its

i) Duration and

ii) Content ?

39. Now in the end, we would like to know your view about an ideal staff of a voluntary agency. Can you please tell us what attributes an ideal staff should possess?

VII IDENTIFICATION DATA

- i) Age
- ii) Sex
- iii) Nationality
- iv) Religion
- v) Education and skill

a) General

b) Professional and Technical

c) Any special skill

Appendix VI

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR LOCAL STATE AGENCIES' OFFICIALS

1. A profile of the major programmes and projects launched by the state agencies in the field area of the VDO since the establishment of the VDO. Comments on their performance by the state officials, the VDO and the community.
2. Comments on the nature of the VDO, its activities, and their impact?
3. Mention three strong and three weak points about the VDO.
4. Your comments on the identity of the VDOs. { viz. do you think it has become an appendage to the developmental apparatus of the state or has its own self-identity? Explain.
5. Any particular activity/ies which created problems or posed challenge to the local bureaucracy. Comments.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE DONOR AGENCY

- 1) What is the philosophy of your organisation? If your organisation believe in advocating some ideology or not? If yes, please tell us about that?
- 2) What are the broad aims and objectives of your organisation?
- 3) What roles does your organisation see for grassroots voluntary development organisations, in the contemporary context?
 - 3.1) Do you think that grassroots voluntary development organisations should work as a channel of empowering the target group through well designed projects or they should become an effective source of mobilization? Why do you think so?
- 4) Do you have any priority area (both issue-wise and geographical region-wise) on the basis of which you fund a particular project in a specific region? If yes, please tell us about it.
- 5) What is the usual criteria and procedure adopted, in the selection of a voluntary development organisation for funding?
- 6) Why did you select People's Action for National Integration (PANI) as your partner?
- 7) What is the usual procedure of identifying a particular project/programme for which you provide funds to a VDO?
- 8) Which project/s are you supporting through PANI?
 - 8.1) What exactly do you want to achieve through this project?
 - 8.2) Do you think that this project has been/ would be effective in changing the roles and relationship with the community? If yes, please tell us more about it. If not, why not?
- 9) How do you perceive the relationship between the state and grassroots voluntary development organisations in general?
 - 9.1) In this context, what is the policy of your organisation in particular?
- 10) What is the usual procedure adopted for evaluating the performance of the project implementing agency?
 - 10.1) How do you evaluate PANI, in this context?
- 11) On the basis of your evaluation or any other information, would you mention major strong points of PANI?
- 12) On the basis of your evaluation or any other information, would you mention some weak points of the organisation?

Appendix VIII

PANI: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To promote and encourage national integration and communal harmony.
2. To help farmers, labourers, rural artisans, and youth in obtaining facilities as required by them.
3. To promote and develop appropriate rural technology.
4. To promote and develop non-conventional and renewable energy sources.
5. To promote and develop health and nutrition for women and children.
6. To promote cottage industries and village industries, agro-industries, irrigation, drinking water, social forestry, agriculture and animal husbandry.
7. To promote integrated development of the area.
8. To promote, undertake, and set-up-training centres, research evaluation, educational activities, and extension in furtherance of aims of the association.
9. To secure and raise funds, aids, and other support from national and international agencies, governmental agencies to carry out the activities of the association.

Source: Memorandum of Association

Appendix IX

FIRST EXECUTIVE BODY MEMBERS: PANI

S.No.	Name	Occupation	Address	Designation
1.	Mr. Paras Bhai	Social Worker	PRADATA, Dist. Phoolbani, Orissa	Founder Chairman
2.	Mr. Awadhesh Kr.	-do-	A-16, Pitampura, Delhi-110034	Executive Chairman
3.	Mr. Bam Bhai	-do-	Ratanpur, Dist. Jamuai, Bihar	Vice-chairman
4.	Mr. V.K.Rai	-do-	Prayavaran Ashram, Badalapur, Jaunpur, (U.P)	Member
5.	Mr. A.K.Singh	-do-	Ganepur, Khajuri, Faizabad (U.P)	-do-
6.	Mr. Pradeep Suman	-do-	KMF Sanjeevani Asptal, Rajghat, Varanasi (U.P)	-do-
7.	Mr. Ram Pravesh Bhai	-do-	Chakra, Haldherpur, Dist. Mau (Mau)	-do-
8.	Mr. K.B.Sahay	-do-	Jagata, Koliyari, Dist. Dhanbad, Bihar	-do-
9.	Ms. Shipra Banrji	-do-	KMF Sanjeevani Asptal, Rajghat, Varanasi (U.P)	-do-
10.	Mr. Bharat Bhusan	-do-	Chachikpur, Dist. Faizabad, (U.P)	Secretary

ISSUES FOR VILLAGE ANALYSIS

(A) INDIVIDUAL ISSUES

1. Nature of interpersonal relationships, brotherhood feeling.
2. Occupation pattern.
3. When and how much time can people afford for the organisational activities?
4. Likes and dislikes of the people.
5. What do they think about their future?
6. To know their intellectual capacity.
7. Level of awareness and sensitivity.
8. Feeling of co-operation
9. Feeling of fraternity.
10. Their expectations.
11. Identification of anti-social elements.
12. Information about human resources.
13. To get acquainted with the villager's expected moral behaviour from the organisational personnel.
14. Degree of selfishness.
15. Identification of the middlemen.
16. Identification of resource persons.
17. Identification of leadership.

(B) ISSUES RELATED WITH THE FAMILY

1. To know about the family structure and relations.
2. Traditional family occupation.

(C) SOCIETAL ISSUES

1. Identification of other agencies and associations working in the area.
2. *Panchayati* system in the village.
3. History of the village.
4. Political situation of the village.
5. Social situation/context of the village.
6. Economic condition of the village.

7. Cultural background of the village.
8. Means of production.
9. Basic reasons for social inequality.
10. Information about various services available to the village.
11. Understanding the mutual dependence.
12. Indigenous knowledge and village industries.
13. Migration.
14. Animal husbandry.
15. Drinking water.
16. Corruption.
17. Caste structure.
18. Religious fanaticism
19. Exploitation.

(D) ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

1. Natural resources.
2. Seasonality.
3. Climate.
4. Geographical locale.
5. Relationship with nature.

Appendix XI

DISHA: AIMS & OBJECTIVES

1. To promote people's involvement in social, economic, and cultural development.
2. To organise urban and rural poor for their own development.
3. To engage in adult education and general education of people for development and to obtain grant in aid/financial assistance to undertake the above activities for rural and other industrial workers from government/semi-government/quasi government/non-Government and other voluntary agencies.
4. To undertake study and research on all matters pertaining to development and to obtain, grant in aid/financial assistance to undertake the above activities from government/semi government/quasi government/ non-Government and other voluntary agencies.
5. To help the involvement and education of young people in activities related to development.
6. To initiate and encourage the education of women.
7. To organise the people's co-operatives for different economic activities.
8. To seek the collaboration and co-ordination of other voluntary, government and non-government agencies for development, relief activities and programmes where possible to collaborate and work with such agencies.
9. To undertake activities to improve the health status of women, children and the general population.
10. To seek the assistance of Khadi and Village Industries Commission for promoting rural employment.
11. To collect and use information for development.
12. To conduct and/or participate in seminars, study circles, camps, field-trips, lectures, conferences, Statistical/Economic/Sociological surveys, research and training programmes, audio-visual mass media services, exhibition etc. in accordance with and in furtherance of the objectives of the organisation and to obtain grant in aid/financial assistance to undertake the above activities for rural and other industrial workers from government/semi-government/quasi-government/non-government and other voluntary agencies.
13. To develop the rural as well as the urban communities with a view to helping individuals, a collective emancipation, and re-organisation of society in truly democratic manner.

14. To inculcate the idea of social service, community life and co-operative growth in individuals and group of individuals with the development of a sense of social awareness or community consciousness.
15. To emphasise an integrated approach to rural development.
16. To undertake activities for upliftment and rehabilitate for directly or indirectly bonded labour and weaker section of society.
17. To undertake activities to protect and enrich the environment.
18. To undertake legal aid activities related to the weaker sections of the society.
19. To help and organise the unorganised rural labourers for the basic rights.
20. To undertake activities related to Tribe and Harijan development.
21. To promote and establish cottage and village industries to promote rural employment.
22. To organise, promote, administer, aid centres of community activities in accordance with and in furtherance of the above objectives of the organisation.
23. To aid and support deserving and/or socially physically handicapped individuals whenever and wherever necessary, financially or otherwise.
24. To obtain grant in aid/financial assistance to carry out all of the objectives of the memorandum of the organisation from government/non-government/semi-government/quasi-government and other voluntary agencies.
25. To do all such matters and things necessary, conducive, incidental or ancillary to promote and further the objectives of the organisation and more particularly to submit views or make representations before authorities, committees, commissions, or other bodies including the general public, or any subject affecting the interests of the people and to promote or assist the promotion of any legislation or regulation which may appear to be in the interest of the organisation in accordance with and in furtherance of its objectives.

Appendix XII

FIRST EXECUTIVE BODY PROFILE: DISHA

S.No.	Name	Occupation	Address	Office
1.	Mr. H.P.Gupta	Social Worker	Court Road, Saharanpur	Chairman
2.	Mr. K.N.Tewari	Development Worker	253, Dakra, Dehradun Cantt	Secretary
3.	Ms. Manorma Kukreti	-do-	Rly Rd. Doiwala, Dehradun	Treasurer
4.	Mr. Rajiv Jain	Social Worker	D414, defence Colony, N.Delhi	Member
5.	Mr. Sanjeev Garg	-do-	Garg Niwas, Saharanpur	-do-
6.	Mr. Ramesh Chand	Agriculture	V. Pathed, Chilkana, Saharanpur	-do-
7.	Mr. Riyasat Ali	-do-	V. Firozabad, Chilkana, Saharanpur	-do-

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